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THE EARLY CHURCH IN ITS CONTEXT

Essays in Honor of Everett Ferguson

EDITED BY

ABRAHAM J. MALHERBE
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PREFACE

During the last three decades, Everett Ferguson has contributed immensely to our knowledge of early Christianity, and there is no sign that his literary output is abating. This collection of articles from friends, colleagues, and former students reflects the breadth and diversity of Professor Ferguson's own interests and, therefore, generally focuses on the church and the context in which it existed during its earliest centuries. The editors are grateful to the many colleagues who wished to participate in honoring Professor Ferguson by contributing to this volume and regret that they could not accommodate everyone who wished to share in celebrating Ferguson's sixty-fifth birthday in this way. We are also grateful for the assistance we have received from many, but no one has contributed more to this volume than Carolyn Thompson, to whom preparing the book for the press was a labor of love and affection for our honoree. Her close attention to detail has dramatically reduced the errors for which we are responsible.

August 1997

Abraham J. Malherbe
Frederick W. Norris
James W. Thompson

EVERETT FERGUSON: AN APPRECIATION

Abraham J. Malherbe

William Everett Ferguson was born in Montgomery, Texas, on 18 February 1933, to be the only child of William Everett Sr. and Edith Alice Curling Ferguson. He was as loving a son as he has been a husband to the former Nancy Lewis and father to their children, Ray, Ann, and Pat. Everett's parents were devoted to their church, and Everett's and Nancy's lives, as those of their children, revolved around the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, where Everett has been an elder for many years. Ferguson is first and foremost a churchman, and that commitment has informed every aspect of his life.

Everett was always the precocious student. He entered primary school in El Campo, Texas, at the age of five, and graduated from high school when he was sixteen. He graduated from Abilene Christian College in 1953 *summa cum laude* and received his M.A. from the same institution a year later. He was selected to deliver the Greek Oration during the graduation service at the Harvard Divinity School in 1956, when he received the S.T.B. *cum laude.* While at Harvard, he received an award from the Christian Research Foundation for a paper on Minucius Felix that he had written for one of his courses. He received the Ph.D. from Harvard in 1959. Ferguson served as dean of the fledgling Northeastern Institute for Christian Education in Villanova, Pennsylvania, from 1959 to 1962, when he joined the faculty at Abilene Christian College. He taught there until taking early retirement in 1990 in order to devote himself to research and study.

Everett Ferguson's unassuming manner has not prevented him from making extraordinary contributions to scholarship. His enormous capacity to amass prodigious amounts of information, his great powers of concentration, and his well-honed intellect have combined to make him a person of great erudition. They have also resulted in scholarship that is commonsensical and trustworthy.

The influence of Ferguson's teachers, joined with these personal qualities, formed his scholarly orientation. His first teacher of church history was LeMoine G. Lewis, at Abilene Christian College, whose enthusiasm for his discipline sent Everett to Harvard, where, like Lewis

before him, he assisted Arthur Darby Nock in the latter's course on the history of religion, and he wrote his dissertation under the direction of George Huntston Williams, as Lewis also had done. Nock's influence would later become evident in Ferguson's successful book *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (2d ed., 1993). From Williams he received a breadth of knowledge of the church's history seldom found today. From Williams he also received a strong foundation in institutional church history, reflected in his Ph.D. dissertation, "Ordination in the Ancient Church: An Examination of the Theological and Constitutional Motifs in the Light of Biblical and Gentile Sources." The most recent expression of this interest is his nontechnical book, *The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today* (1996), which will be welcomed especially by members of his own fellowship.

Ferguson's perspective on the nature of early Christianity differs markedly from much of European scholarship, which tends to focus on controversies as the nodal points in the history of the church. Rather than accord so much significance to the points of disjuncture, he assumes that overwhelmingly more important was continuity and that this continuity is observable in the development of the church's institutions and worship. The vast majority of his publications reflect this conviction.

It would be fair to say that this conception of the matter is also of theological importance to Ferguson. This is already in evidence in his first book, *Early Christians Speak* (1971; rev. ed., 1986), written for nonspecialist members of his church, in which he collects texts from the first three centuries to illuminate continuity and change. His most recent nontechnical book, written with the same readership in mind, presents an idealistic view of the church in a manner that requires the church to be at the center of a Fergusonian theology.

Ferguson recognizes the importance of the cultural, including the philosophical and religious, ecology of early Christianity; and as his book on the "backgrounds" shows, he is intimately familiar with the non-Christian ancient world. Having benefited so much from his focus on the church and its institutions, we now look forward to his integration of early Christianity with its world.

In addition to his many writings, Ferguson has contributed to his discipline and his church in many other ways. As his publications in *Studia Patristica* show, he has for many years been a regular participant in the Oxford Patristic conferences. He is active in the American Society of Church History and was one of the founding members of the North

American Patristic Society, which he later served as president. His breadth of knowledge and orderliness of mind admirably equipped him for the prodigious amount of editorial work he has done. An early supporter of the *Restoration Quarterly,* he later edited that journal for seven years. Beyond his own field, he edited the *Living Word Commentary* (23 volumes) series on the New Testament, intended for readers from his own fellowship. He founded *The Second Century* and edited it until its transformation into the *Journal of Early Christian Studies,* of which he is now a co-editor. He edited the highly successful *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity,* now in its second edition, and also *Studies in Early Christianity* (1993), eighteen volumes containing the most outstanding articles dealing with early Christianity.

Everett Ferguson has never been content with what he has already learned. Well educated in the literature of and about early Christianity, he felt the need to learn more about its archaeology and art and worked his way into these fields. In the process, he has also become an accomplished photographer, as is evident from the photographs in his reference works. The second edition of his *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (1997) shows that his sense of the scope of what constituted the early church and of what is important for understanding it has grown significantly since the first edition (1990). The new edition provides more information on philosophy and religion and on Christianity in the non-Western world. So fertile a mind justifies our hope that he will continue to enrich our knowledge of the early church and its world.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations used in the notes follow the guidelines of the *Journal of Biblical Literature* (cf. *JBL* 107 [1988] 579–96) and the reference system used in Liddell-Scott-Jones' *A Greek-English Lexicon* and the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*. The following abbreviations are used in this volume in addition to the ones listed in these standard reference works.

AOC	Archives de l'Orient Chrétien
ACC	Alcuin Club Collections
AE	*American Ethnologist*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
BGBE	Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
CH	*Church History*
CHL	Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CCR	*Coptic Church Review*
ClRev	*Classical Review*
CPT	Cambridge Patristic Texts
CurMTh	*Currents in Mission and Theology*
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
EEC	*Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*
EH	Europäische Hochschulschriften
EncEC	*Encyclopedia of the Early Church*
ESW	Ecumenical Studies in Worship
FJCD	Forschungen zum jüdisch-christlichen Dialog
GMC	Garland Medieval Casebooks
GTJ	*Grace Theological Journal*
HaBeS	Heidelberger althistorische Beiträge und epigraphische Studien
HFF	Hermeneia Foundations and Facts
HSt	Humanistic Series
JChS	*Journal of Church and State*
HAW	Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft
HSer	Humanistic Series
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*

JÖBG	*Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft*
JSL	*Journal of Sacred Literature*
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
MQR	*Mennonite Quarterly Review*
MSkP	Münchener Studien zur klassischen Philologie
OC	Oriens Christianus
OCA	Orientala Christiana Analecta
ODB	*Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*
PBR	*Patristic and Byzantine Review*
PSB	*Princeton Seminary Bulletin*
PTS	Paderborn Theologische Studien
RST	Religious Studies and Theology
SHC	Studies in Hellenistic Civilization
SEC	Studies in Early Christianity
SFSHJ	South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism
SHAW	Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaft
StPat	*Studia Patristica*
StSin	*Studia Sinaitica*
Thhist	*Théologique historique*
VCS	Vigiliae Christianae Supplements
TSR	*Trinity Seminary Review*
WS	*Wiener Studien*

WHAT GNOSTICS KNEW[1]

Harold W. Attridge

"Gnostics," by definition, claim to know, or, more precisely, to have intimate acquaintance with, someone or something about themselves and the divine. This paper will explore some of the evidence for the specialized knowledge of certain "gnostics" in the high imperial period as one possible indicator of their general social location.

What was available to be known was considerable. In the second century CE classical astronomy attained its definitive form with the system of Ptolemy. Greek medicine reached a new height of systematic reflection in the work of Galen, whose studies of anatomy, physiology, and pathology would guide medical thinking for another 1500 years.[2] Mathematicians and engineers also recorded significant accomplishments.[3] While most of this scientific knowledge remained in the hands of specialists, some of scientific results of the Hellenistic and early imperial periods reached the level of general consciousness at least among upper classes.

A useful point of reference is Plutarch, who provides a picture of the role of scientific learning in sophisticated upper-class Greek society. His *Table Talk*, or *Quaestiones convivales*, purportedly offers a collection of reminiscences of dinner conversations among Plutarch and his friends in Athens or Boeotia in the late first or early second century. Characters include members of the highest level of Roman society. At least two are consuls: Mestrius Florus, who held office under Vespasian and served

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[1] A version of this paper was delivered to the Conference on Theology, Scientific Knowledge and Society in Antiquity at the Center for Theological Inquiry, Princeton, on Nov. 16, 1993.

[2] On Galen, in recent years, see Vivian Nutton, *Galen: Problems and Prospects* (London: Wellcome Institute, 1981); R. J. Hankinson, *Galen on the Therapeutic Method Books I and II* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991).

[3] In general see Marshall Clagett, *Greek Science in Antiquity* (New York: Abelard-Schuman, 1955); Otto Neugebauer, *The Exact Sciences in Antiquity* (Providence: Brown University Press, 1957); Thomas W. Africa, *Science and the State in Greece and Rome* (New York: Wiley, 1968); G. E. R. Lloyd, *Greek Science after Aristotle* (New York: Norton, 1973); and idem, *The Revolutions of Wisdom: Studies in the Claims and Practice of Ancient Science* (Sather Classical Lectures 52; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

as proconsul of Asia, and Philopappus, a Syrian prince and Athenian archon, the remains of whose funerary monument still grace the hill southwest of the Acropolis. Other dinner companions are aristocrats such as Themistocles, a descendant of the renowned Athenian general, and Lucanius, the chief priest of the Isthmian games. Other country squires like Plutarch himself include his relatives Crato, Firmus, and Patrocleas, his friend Philinus, his brothers Timon and Lamprias, and finally Sossius Seneco, dedicatee of the collection, recipient of two honorary inscriptions at Athens. Contributing to the scientific dimension of these conversations is the presence of several physicians, including Cleomenes, Crato, Moschion, Nicias of Nicopolis from the school of Erasistratus, Oneisicratus, Philo, and Tryphon.[4]

These dialogues afford a window on high "society." Plutarch obviously travelled among the circles of old aristocratic families, conscious of their station and proud of their heritage.[5] They were not, perhaps, at the very apex of imperial society, but stood close to it. Their support was essential to the empire's functioning, and in subsequent centuries men of their class would play an increasing role in imperial administration. Their interests in and awareness of scientific investigation provide a benchmark for comparison.

The dinner conversations reported by Plutarch, however much a work of fiction, give a flavor of topics of discussion in polite society toward the end of the first century CE. The participants are generally men of considerable learning. They have read widely in classical literature. Homer, of course, grounds their erudition.[6] They also have read the ancient dramatists[7] and lyric and epic poets.[8] They cite historians, at

---

[4] Note the lengthy exposition of Erasistratus by Nicias at *Quaest. conv.* 7.1.1. 698A–D.

[5] Note the discussion of the status of Athenian tribes in *Quaest. conviv.* 1.10.

[6] Homer is cited too frequently to list.

[7] E.g., Aeschylus (1.8.1.625D; 2.5.2.639F) *Suppliants* (1.3.1.619E); Aristophanes *Peace*, *Frogs* (2.1.12.634C); Eupolis (4.1.3.662D; 7.1.3.699A); Euripides (1.2.1.615D; 1.4.3.622A; 2.1.2.630B; 7.1.3.699A; 7.10.2.716B); Menander (7.8.2.712B); Sophocles (1.2.6.619A; 1.8.1.625D; 2.5.2.639F) *Oedipus Rex* (1.5.2.623C; 2.1.6.632D).

[8] E.g., Alcman (3.10.3.659B), Aratus (5.8.2.683F), Archilochus (10.3.2.658B), Callimachus (5.3.3.677B), Eratosthenes (7.1.3.699A), Euphorion (5.3.3.677A), Hesiod *Works and Days* (1.2.6.618F; 3.9.1.657D; 7.2.3.701B; 7.3.1.701D), Pindar (1.2.5.618B; 7.5.2.704F; 7.5.3.706A), Sappho (1.5.1.622C), Timotheus (3.10.3.659A).

least of the classical period.[9] Philosophers, particularly Plato and Aristotle, loom large, although some figures of the Hellenistic epoch also surface.[10]

Among widely ranging topics of conversation, certain areas are prominent. Plutarch and friends often discuss practices of dining,[11] including Jewish dietary laws,[12] drink and its effects,[13] the effects of age,[14] poetry and drama,[15] Greek social and religious customs,[16] exotic habits of Jews and Egyptians,[17] certain natural phenomena, often related to food or drink,[18] physiological matters, again with frequent culinary connections,[19] philosophical or quasi-philosophical conundrums,[20] sports,[21] agriculture, and husbandry.[22] Polite conversation is not totally devoid of scientific or technical matters. The dinner companions chat about agricultural concerns: the process for grafting trees,[23] and the preparation of oil and honey;[24] manufacturing processes: dyeing[25] and

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[9] E.g., Alexander the Great *Journal* (1.6.1.623E); Herodotus (2.3.2.636E); Metrodorus *History of Ionia* (6.8.1.694A); Neanthes of Cyzicus *Legends of the States* (1.10.2.628B); Polybius *Sayings of the Romans* (4. proem.1.659E); Procles (5.3.3. 677B); Timaeus of Tauromenium (5.3.2.676D); Xenophon *Anabasis* (1.4.2.620D), *Cyropaedia* (2.1.1.629E; 2.1.11.634B), *Memorabilia* (4.1.2.661F), *Symposium* (2.1.2. 630A; 2.1.6.632E; 3.6.1.653C).

[10] E.g., Epicurus *Symposium* (3.5.1.652A; 3.5.2.653B).

[11] *Quaest. conv.* 1.1–4; 5.5–6 discuss aspects of dinner parties; 6.7 treats whether it is right to strain wine.

[12] See *Quaest. conv.* 4.4; 4.5.

[13] See *Quaest. conv.* 1.7; 3.7–8; 5.4.

[14] *Quaest. conv.* 1.8; 3.3.

[15] See *Quaest. conv.* 5.1; 5.2.

[16] *Quaest. conv.* 5.3; 6.8 (on an apotropaic ritual at Athens).

[17] *Quaest. conv.* 4.6 (on the God of the Jews and Dionysos); 5.10.2 (one of many passages on Egyptian customs).

[18] *Quaest. conv.* 3.2 (on whether ivy is hot or cold) introduces a series of conversations revolving around the same principles. Most of the later topics have something to do with eating or drinking. Cf. 6.4 and 6.5 (on cooling water).

[19] *Quaest. conv.* 6.1; 6.2; 6.3 all deal with questions of hunger and thirst; 7.1 takes up an old chestnut of whether the lungs play a role in digestion of liquids, a notion found in Plato *Timaeus* 70C, 91A.

[20] *Quaest. conv.* 2.3 (whether the hen or the egg came first). More serious are the theological and philosophical discussions of *Quaest. conv.* 8.2.

[21] *Quaest. conv.* 2.4 (wrestling); 2.5 (Homer's order of the games).

[22] *Quaest. conv.* 2.6; 5.9.

[23] *Quaest. conv.* 2.6.

[24] *Quaest. conv.* 7.3.

[25] *Quaest. conv.* 4.1.2.661C.

producing lead acetate;[26] medical issues: a fat-free diet[27] and pharmacology;[28] physiological matters: the processes of digestion,[29] putrefaction,[30] and vision;[31] and general issues of natural history: the composition of sea-water[32] and the "heat" of ivy.[33]

Plutarch and friends enjoyed acquaintance with natural history and had anecdotal evidence of natural phenomena. Their familiarity with science frequently derived from the classics. Thus one dialogue begins with a question about [Ps.-]Aristotle's *Scientific Problems*.[34] Scientific observations and theories, often involving Aristotle or Theophrastus,[35] frequently explain natural phenomena or defend a position on a social custom. Particularly impressive are the discussions in book 8, some of which supposedly took place at the anniversary of the birthdays of Socrates and Plato.[36] Theology plays an important role in this book, and, as befits a Platonist, Plutarch highlights the relevance of mathematics. The following illustrates features of the conversation.

> . . . but geometry especially, being, as Philolaus says, the source and mother-city of the rest [scil. of the sciences], leads the understanding upward and turns it in a new direction, as it undergoes, so to speak, a complete purification and a gradual deliverance from sense-perception. It was for this reason that Plato himself reproached Eudoxus and Archytas and Menaechmus for setting out to remove the problem of doubling the cube into the realm of instruments and mechanical devices, as if they were trying to find two mean proportionals not by the use of reason but in whatever way would work. In this way, he thought, the advantage of geometry was dissipated and destroyed, since it slipped back into the realm of sense-perception

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[26] *Quaest. conv.* 6.5.1.691B.

[27] *Quaest. conv.* 4.1.1.661B.

[28] Thus almonds prevent drunkenness (*Quaest. conv.* 1.6.4.624D); bronze rust may be used for healing (3.10.3.659C); stomach tonics (*Quaest. conv.* 3.5.1.652B–C) and various flowers (*Quaest. conv.* 3.1.3.617D) have their medicinal uses.

[29] *Quaest. conv.* 2.2.1.635B–C.

[30] *Quaest. conv.* 3.10.2.658A.

[31] *Quaest. conv.* 1.8.2–4.626Aff., with reference especially to the *Timaeus*.

[32] *Quaest. conv.* 1.9.2.627A, with reference to Aristotle.

[33] *Quaest. conv.* 3.2.1.648C, with reference to Theophrastus.

[34] *Quaest. conv.* 8.10.1.734C.

[35] E.g., *Quaest. conv.* 6.4.1.690C, an unnamed guest found in Aristotle, in an otherwise unknown text, an explanation of why water from a well became cooler when kept in the air of the well.

[36] *Quaest. conv.* 8.1.1.717B; the days in question are the sixth and seventh of Targelion (roughly May).

> instead of soaring upward and laying hold of the eternal and immaterial images in the presence of which God is always God.[37]

Mathematics is the highest "natural science." To engage in any experimentation connected with mathematical questions diverts the researcher from its true end: to lead the mind to God.

Within the same book, one discussion (8.9) prominently involves physicians. The interchange between Plutarch and his medical friend, Philo, indicates the philosopher's medical interests:

> Philo, the physician, was maintaining that the disease called elephantiasis had been known for only a short time, since none of the ancient physicians had written a treatise on it, though they expatiated on many others that were minute and petty and, to most, obscure. I [i.e., Plutarch] supplied him with an additional witness from the field of philosophy in the person of Athenodorus, who wrote, in the first book of his *Epidemics*, that both elephantiasis and hydrophobia first made their appearance in the time of Asclepiades.

Although Plutarch claims that his contribution came from the realm of philosophy, his own metier, the title of the work cited reveals his dabbling in medical literature. His reading was obviously not confined to the classics, nor did it exclude more "scientific" works. Yet the fact that he is reluctant to admit his interest, coupled with the traditional Platonic disdain of banausic involvements, suggests the difficulty that "science" faced among the intelligentsia of the second century.

The *Table Talk* thus shows something of the role of natural science in one corner of Mediterranean society in the late first or early second century. It is present, an accepted part of the culture of literate gentlemen, but, unless it is bound up with medicine, it is not pursued as a major vocation by any. Scientific issues are discussed, but they cannot be allowed to detract from the most serious pursuits of the life of the mind.

Christians with pretensions to learning mirror the attitudes of figures such as Plutarch. A more or less orthodox gnostic, Clement of Alexandria offers a useful point of comparison because, as in the case of Plutarch, it is possible to obtain a profile of his intellectual interests and reading habits. The *Stromata*, which, like the *Quaestiones convivales*, contains a rich mine of literary citations and allusions, will serve as the next test case. Much of what Clement cites derives from Scripture or

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[37] *Quaest. conviv.* 8.1.1.718E–F.

Jewish authors[38] and from Christian writers of various degrees of orthodoxy, but he also knows and cites numerous classical authors, poets,[39] playwrights,[40] historians,[41] and, of course, philosophers.[42] Caution is in order. As Robert M. Grant has wryly noted, Clement "liked to name sources he did not use and use sources he did not name."[43] Nonetheless, Clement's citations provide some sense of his intellectual horizons. His range of learning, not as broad as that of Plutarch and his friends, is still impressive. Yet natural history plays a smaller role and medicine virtually none. More importantly, a major purpose for which the learning is displayed, to show the greater antiquity of Scripture and the superiority of Christian revelation, is quite foreign to the priest from Chaeronea. Intention and literary aims distinguish the two figures; social standing also plays a role. However learned Clement may have been, he gives no indication of belonging to the leisured classes that enjoyed time to dabble in scientific pursuits and to discuss scientific issues, however superficially, at their soirées.

Despite the differences between Clement and Plutarch, Clement avows openness to secular learning. Consider his comments about his own enterprise in the preface to book 2:

> By consequence, also we must treat of what is called the curriculum of study—how far it is serviceable; and of astrology, and mathematics, and magic, and sorcery. For all the Greeks boast of these as the highest sciences.[44]

Similarly, his portrait of the true Gnostic (*Strom.* 6.10), a portrait to which he presumably was trying to conform, portrays his ideals:

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[38] The importance of his testimony on this score should not be underestimated. Along with Eusebius, he is our major source for the fragments of Hellenistic-Jewish literature originally preserved by Alexander Polyhistor.

[39] E.g., in addition to Homer, Hesiod (*Strom.* 1.6.36.2; 1.21.105.5; 1.28.181.6); Pindar (*Strom.* 1.10.49.2; 1.28.181.3).

[40] Euripides (*Strom.* 1.8.40.3; 1.15.73.5).

[41] Historians are sparsely represented. Herodotus is the leading figure (*Strom.* 1.14.62.3; 1.14.65.1; 1.16.75.1; 1.21.127.3; 3.3.16.1; 6.2.19.4; 6.2.23.1).

[42] Plato is frequently cited, and virtually the whole Platonic corpus is represented. Aristotle appears frequently, but there are few citations of his works on biology or physics. Clement's interests lay in Aristotle's logic, ethics, and psychology.

[43] Robert M. Grant, *Heresy and Criticism* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993) 30.

[44] Citations from Clement are taken from Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers* (New York: Scribners, 1913) vol. 2.

> For to him knowledge (gnosis) is the principal thing. Consequently, therefore, he applies to the subjects that are a training for knowledge, taking from each branch of study its contribution to the truth. Prosecuting, then, the proportion of harmonies in music; and in arithmetic noting the increasing and decreasing of numbers, and their relations to one another, and how most things fall under some proportion of numbers; studying geometry, which is abstract essence, he perceives a continuous distance and an immutable essence which is different from these bodies. And by astronomy, again, raised from the earth in his mind, he is elevated along with heaven and will revolve with its revolution, studying ever diviner things, and their harmony with each other. Starting from them Abraham ascended to the knowledge of Him who created them. Further, the Gnostic will avail himself of dialectics, fixing on the distinction of genera into species, and will master the distinction of existences, till he come to what are primary and simple.

Clement obviously has an apologetic edge to his praise of secular wisdom, and some of his co-religionists follow his lead with considerable reluctance:

> But the multitude are frightened at the Hellenic philosophy, as children are at masks, being afraid lest it lead them astray. But if the faith (for I cannot call it knowledge) which they possess be such as to be dissolved by plausible speech, let it be by all means dissolved, and let them confess that they will not retain the truth. For truth is immoveable; but false opinion dissolves. We choose, for instance, one purple by comparison with another purple. So that, if one confesses that he has not a heart that has been made right, he has not the table of the money-changers or the test of words. And how can he be any longer a money-changer, who is not able to prove and distinguish spurious coin, even offhand?

Clement's resistance to philistinism and dedication to the whole range of scientific knowledge are impressive, but the *Stromata* fails to deliver on its promise. In the chapter immediately following his most impressive remarks (*Strom.* 6.11), Clement offers an example of the true gnostic's use of the learned disciplines. This, in fact, is the only chapter where Clement appeals to such disciplines. His example consists of a bit of numerological interpretation of Scripture, finding in the number of Abraham's servants mentioned in Gen 14:14, namely 318, a symbol of Christ:

> As in astronomy we have Abraham as an instance, so also in arithmetic we have the same Abraham. "For, hearing that Lot was taken captive, and having numbered his own servants, born in his house, 318 (τιη)," he defeats a very great number of the enemy.

> They say, then, that the character representing 300 is, as to shape, the type of the Lord's sign, and the Iota and the Eta indicate the Savior's name; that it was indicated, accordingly, that Abraham's domestics were in salvation, who having fled to the Sign and the Name became lords of the captives, and of the very many unbelieving nations that followed them.
>
> Now the number 300 is, 3 by 100. Ten is allowed to be the perfect number. And 8 is the first cube,[45] which is equality in all the dimensions—length, breadth, depth.
>
> "The days of men shall be," it is said, "120 (ρκ) years." And the sum is made up of the numbers from 1 to 15 added together. And the moon at 15 days is full.
>
> On another principle, 120 is a triangular number, and consists of the equality of the number 64, [which consists of eight of the odd numbers beginning with unity], the addition of which (1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15) in succession generate squares; and of the inequality of the number 56, consisting of seven of the even numbers beginning with 2 (2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14), which produce the numbers that are not squares.
>
> Again, according to another way of indicating, the number 120 consists of four numbers—of one triangle, 15; of another, a square, 25; of a third, a pentagon, 35; and of a fourth, a hexagon, 45. The 5 is taken according to the same ratio in each mode.[46] For in triangular numbers, from the unity 5 comes 15; and in squares, 25; and of those in succession, proportionally. Now 25, which is the number 5 from unity, is said to be the symbol of the Levitical tribe. And the number 35 depends also on the arithmetic, geometric, and harmonic scale of doubles—6, 8, 9, 12; the addition of which makes 35. In these days, the Jews say that seven months' children are formed. And the number 45 depends on the scale of triples 6, 9, 12, 18 the addition of which makes 45; and similarly, in these days they say that nine months' children are formed.
>
> Such, then, is the style of the example in arithmetic.

The passage falls into two parts. The first involves gematria, linking the number in Scripture (318) with the name of Jesus. This traditional exegesis appears in the *Epistle of Barnabas* 9.7–9, written before 135 CE, possibly in Alexandria, and cited by Clement.[47] The second half of the

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[45] It is not, of course, a cube in the sense of a number the cube root of which is an integer. Rather, it is a cube in its geometric expression. A cube, that is, has eight corners, each of which can be represented by a numbered point.

[46] That is, the length of a side of each of the figures is five.

[47] The index to the GCS edition (Otto Stählin and Ursula Treu, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, vol. 4: *Register, Erster Teil* [GCS; 2d ed.; Berlin: Akademie, 1980]) notes some 30 passages in Clement's works where the *Epistle of Barnabas* is cited, often as "Barnabas the Apostle." E.g., *Barn.* 1.5 and 2:2–3 at *Strom.* 2.6.31.2; *Barn.* 4.11 at

exposition is more recondite, yet the theories involved are basic to Greek arithmetic and readily found in the standard first-century CE handbook *Introduction to Arithmetic* by Nicomachus of Gerasa.[48] Fundamental is the Pythagorean notion that numbers (or at least positive integers) may be expressed as geometrical shapes. Thus Nicomachus explains triangular numbers:

> A triangular number is one which, when it is analyzed into units, shapes into triangular form the equilateral placement of its parts in a plane. 3, 6, 10, 15, 21, 28 and so on, are examples of it; for their regular formations, expressed graphically, will be at once triangular and equilateral.[49]

The sequence of such triangular numbers continues: 36, 45, 55, 66, 78, 91, 105, 120. In the triangular arrangement of 120, the number of interest to Clement, there would be fifteen rows of dots. The number of dots in each row would be that of the successive positive integers from 1 to 15. He is intrigued by one property of this geometrically arranged number, that the sums of successive pairs of odd-numbered rows are squares,[50] while the even ones are not.[51]

Clement also finds it of interest that 120 can be expressed as the sum of other regular geometrical numbers, a triangle (15), square (25), pentagon (35), and hexagon (45).[52] The pentagonal number 35 further excites his interest because of the way one set of its addends (6, 8, 9, 12) combines the arithmetic, geometric, and harmonic proportions, a theory dear to Greek arithmetists. This requires some explanation.

Proportions can be expressed as the relationship between two sets of numbers: a : b : : c : d. In some proportions, or in Clement's term "scale

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Strom. 2.7.35.5; *Barn.* 4.11; 6:5–10 at *Strom.* 5.10.63.1–6; *Barn.* 10.1 at *Strom.* 2.15.67.3; *Barn.* 16.7–9 at *Strom.* 2.20.116.4–117.4; *Barn.* 21.5, 6, 9 at *Strom.* 2.18.84.3.

[48] The dates of Nicomachus can be fixed generally to the first century. He mentions Thrasyllus, a writer on music who lived in the reign of the emperor Tiberius. He does not mention Ptolemy, whose astronomical observations are datable to the second quarter of the second century. Furthermore, Apuleius is reported to have translated Nicomachus's *Introduction to Arithmetic* into Latin. For discussion of his life, see Martin Luther D'Ooge, *Nicomachus of Gerasa, Introduction to Arithmetic* (HSer 16; University of Michigan Studies; London: Macmillan, 1926) 71–78.

[49] *Introduction to Arithmetic* 8.1

[50] That is, $1 + 3 = 4$ or 2^2; $4 + 5 = 9$ or 3^2; $7 + 9 = 16$ or 4^2, etc.

[51] That is, $2 + 4 = 6$, a non-square; $6 + 6 = 12$, a non-square, etc.

[52] According to *Introduction to Arithmetic* 2.10.1, "The pentagonal number is one which likewise [i.e., like the triagonal and square numbers] upon its resolution into units and depiction as a plane figure assumes the form of an equilateral pentagon. 1, 5, 12, 22, 35, 51, 70, and analogous numbers are examples."

of doubles," b may = c, and the proportion will consist of two terms and a "mean" defined in various ways. Of proportions in general, Nicomachus notes,

> After this it would be the proper time to incorporate the nature of proportions, a thing most essential for speculation about the nature of the universe and for the propositions of music, astronomy, and geometry, and not least for the study of the works of the ancients, and thus to bring the *Introduction to Arithmetic* to the end that is at once suitable and fitting.[53]

> The first three proportions, then, which are acknowledged by all the ancients, Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, are the arithmetic, geometric, and harmonic; and there are three others subcontrary to them, which do not have names of their own, but are called in more general terms the fourth, fifth, and sixth forms of mean; after which the moderns discover four others as well, making up the number ten, which, according to the Pythagorean view, is the most perfect possible.[54]

The general definition of the three proportions is as follows:

> In the arithmetic proportion the mean term is one that exceeds and is exceeded by an equal amount; in the geometric proportion it is differentiated from the extremes by the same ratio, and in the harmonic it is greater and smaller than the extremes by the same fraction of those same extremes. (2.27.1)

To simplify, in an arithmetic proportion the terms will differ by the same amount (a : b : : b : c where b – a = c – b, or b = [a + c]/2). Thus for the numbers in question, the arithmetic proportion obtains 6 : 9 : : 9 : 12. In a geometric proportion the ratio between the terms will be equivalent (a : b : : c : d; where a/b = c/d). Thus for the numbers in question, the geometric proportion obtains 6 : 8 : : 9 : 12. In a harmonic proportion the ratio between the end terms will be the same as the ratio between the differences between the middle and end term to the relevant end term (a : b : : b : c; where a/c = [b – a]/[c – b]). Nicomachus gives a formula for determining the harmonic mean: "For the harmonic mean, you must multiply the difference of the extremes by the lesser term and divide the product by the sum of the extremes, then add the quotient to the lesser term, and the result will be the harmonic mean."[55] For the terms in question, 6 and 12, the formula {harmonic mean = a[(c – a)/(a + c)] + a}

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[53] *Introduction to Arithmetic* 2.21.1.
[54] *Introduction to Arithmetic* 2.22.1.
[55] *Introduction to Arithmetic* 2.27.7.

yields 8. Hence the harmonic proportion is 6 : 8 : : 8 : 12, and the ratio of the differences is equivalent (2/6 = 4/12).

What can one make of such a passage? On the surface, Clement seems to be even more "scientific" than Plutarch's polite company, where, despite some discussion of proportions,[56] there are no mathematical gymnastics of the sort in evidence in the *Stromata*. Yet the fact that this passage is singular in the *Stromata* should give pause. Clement's remarks in the second half of the "mathematical" *tour de force* are as traditional as the passage on the number 318 that is shared with *Barnabas*. Most of Clement's speculation, in fact, derives from Jewish exegetical sources. Philo of Alexandria, whom Clement knows and cites,[57] was enamored of the symbolic value of numbers in ways that probably influenced Clement. For instance, a passage of Philo illuminates Clement's treatment of the proportions involved in the sequence 6, 8, 9, 12. In his rhapsodic reflection on the number 7 in *De opificio mundi* 107–8, Philo argues:

> It (the number 7) is, however, not only a bringer of perfection, but, one may say, absolutely harmonious, and in a certain sense the source of the most beautiful scale, which contains all the harmonies, that yielded by the interval of four, by the interval of five, by the octave; and all the progressions, the arithmetic, the geometric, and the harmonic as well. The scheme is formed out of the following numbers: 6, 8, 9, 12. 8 stands to 6 in the proportion 4 : 3, which regulates the harmony of 4; 9 stands to 6 in the proportion 3 : 2, which regulates the harmony of 5; 12 stands to 6 in the proportion 2 : 1, which regulates the octave. And, as I said, it contains all the progressions, the arithmetic, made up of 6 and 9 and 12—for as the middle number exceeds the first by 3, so it in its turn is exceeded to the same amount by the last; the geometric, made up of the four numbers (6, 8, 9, 12); for 12 bears the same proportion to 9 that 8 does to 6, and the proportion is 4 : 3; the harmonic, made up of three numbers (6, 8, and 12), etc.

Philo has obviously adapted arithmetical theory on number progressions to his reflection on 7, where the mathematical theory does not, in

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[56] *Quaest. conv.* 8.2.2.719A–B, where the political symbolism of the arithmetic and geometric proportions are explored.

[57] The relationship between the two Alexandrians has most recently been studied by David Runia, *Philo and the Church Fathers* (VCS 32; Leiden: Brill, 1995).

fact, fit. Clement has followed in his footsteps, deploying the theory of proportions, without the hebdomadic concern.[58]

Hence, although Clement's arithmetical symbolism appears to be a function of his sophisticated engagement with Greek culture, it derives from his exegetical tradition. At least some Jewish or Jewish-Christian exegete of Alexandria in the first or second century had enough mathematical knowledge to put it at the service of a theological agenda.

Arithmetic is not the only science that Clement finds in the scriptures. He goes on in *Strom.* 6.10 to treat the geometric symbolism of the tabernacle:

> And let the testimony of geometry be the tabernacle that was constructed, and the ark that was fashioned,—constructed in most regular proportions, and through divine ideas, by the gift of understanding, which leads us from things of sense to intellectual objects, or rather from these to holy things, and to the holy of holies. For the squares of wood indicate that the square form, producing right angles, pervades all, and points out security. And the length of the structure was three hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty, and the height thirty; and above, the ark ends in a cubit, narrowing to a cubit from the broad base like a pyramid, the symbol of those who are purified and tested by fire. And this geometrical proportion has a place, for the transport of those holy abodes, whose differences are indicated by the differences of the numbers set down below.
>
> And the numbers introduced are sixfold, as three hundred is six times fifty; and tenfold, as three hundred is ten times thirty; and containing one and two-thirds, for fifty is one and two-thirds of thirty. Now there are some who say that three hundred cubits are the symbol of the Lord's sign; and fifty, of the hope of the remission given at Pentecost; and thirty, or as in some, twelve, they say points out the preaching [of the Gospel]; because the Lord preached in his thirtieth year; and the apostles were twelve. And the structures terminating in a cubit is the symbol of the advancement of the righteous to oneness and to "the unity of faith" (Eph 4:13).

Clement proceeds to music and astronomy, the treatments of which are even more superficial and probably equally derivative from his exegetical heritage. The ultimate inspiration is clearly Plato, and the elements of Clement's scientific exposition derive, as is all too obvious, from the *Symposium* and the *Timaeus*. Whether they come to Clement

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[58] Two other bits of wisdom in Clement, that in 35 days "the Jews say that seven months' children are formed" and that in 45 days "they say that nine months' children are formed" are also illuminated by Philo's comment on Gen 18:24–32 in his *Quaestiones in Genesin* 4.27.

directly from Plato or from an exegetical tradition is a question of some interest that cannot be pursued here.

One Christian gnostic of the second century, then, engages literature and philosophy as a way of coming to grips with the significance of his faith. While professing openness to all of human knowledge, his range is somewhat more limited. As a good Platonist, he incorporates some number theory into his exegesis when numbers in the biblical text present an opportunity. Yet that is the extent of his engagement with contemporary scientific knowledge, and even that engagement has probably been mediated by Jewish and Christian exegetes.

Clement considers himself a "gnostic" in the best and truest sense. The final portion of this paper will explore some of those to whom Clement would deny the title. One need not resolve the question of whether the term should apply to all representatives of "late antique" spirituality[59] or more narrowly to those Jewish or Christian sects that told a particular myth of origins.[60] For heuristic purposes the boundaries are set by the Nag Hammadi library plus what second- and third-century heresiologists include as Gnostics. Our concern is not with gnostic claims to have acquaintance with the self and the transcendent, or with their myths of origins. The subject is not the gnostics' insight, but their learning.

As in the cases of Plutarch and Clement, a useful starting point consists of the gnostics' reading lists. They may have had special "insight" or "wisdom," but by and large they do not wear much learning on their sleeves. Many texts from Nag Hammadi have no explicit citation of any authorities. Others cite Scripture, either the Old Testament or the New. For the former, references to Moses are most common; for the latter, references to "the apostle" predominate. Nonscriptural citations are infrequent.

Two texts from Nag Hammadi are distinctive. One exception to the absence of extensive quotations is the *Exegesis of the Soul* (NHC II,6), which contains a string of citations from the prophets and psalms, as well as quotations of Homer.[61] Citation technique and exegetical argumentation resemble those of other early Christian works such as the

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[59] E.g., Hans Jonas, *Gnosis und spätantike Geist* (3d ed.; FRLANT n.F. 33; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964).

[60] E.g., Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1987).

[61] Homer is cited as "the poet" at NHC II,6:136.28–137.5 (*Od.* 1.48–59; 4.260–61; 4.261–68).

Epistle of Barnabas. Another text of special interest is the *Origin of the World* (NHC II,5), which refers to the titles of five works, without explicit citation. The titles mentioned are *The Configuration of Fate*,[62] *Seventh Universe of Hieralia*,[63] *The Book of Noraia*,[64] *Account of Oraia*,[65] and *The Book of Solomon*.[66] One other Nag Hammadi tractate to cite a nonbiblical work is the longer version of the *Apocryphon of John*, which refers the reader interested in the correspondence between bodily parts and supernatural beings to a *Book of Zoroaster*.[67]

The character of the nonscriptural works cited in the Nag Hammadi collection consists of three types of material: narratives akin to biblical apocrypha and pseudepigrapha (e.g., *Noraia*, *Oraia*—if the two are indeed distinct) that apparently embellished scriptural accounts, magical works (*Book of Solomon*, apparently dealing with angels and demons, perhaps like the *Sepher Ha-Razim* or the *Testament of Solomon*), and astrological materials (*Configuration of Fate*, *Seventh Universe of Hieralia*, *Zoroaster*, the latter perhaps like various works attributed to fabled eastern sages).[68]

The sources cited by the heresiologists Irenaeus, Clement, and Hippolytus yield a few more examples of explicit intertextuality. Some sources, such as the *Book of Baruch* by the otherwise unknown Justin, seem to be aware of many Greek myths, but they do not cite any general Greco-Roman sources.[69] References to Plato and Aristotle are particularly common in the fragments and testimonies preserved by Hippolytus, but a major question about them is whether the classical allusion is the work of the gnostic teachers or the heresiologist, given his fundamental hypothesis that gnosticism derives from Greek philosophy. The great gnostic teachers of Alexandria, Basilides and Valentinus, have left precious few fragments for analysis.[70] What remains suggests that

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[62] *Orig. World* 107.16–17.

[63] *Orig. World* 112.24.

[64] *Orig. World* 102.8–11.

[65] *Orig. World* 102.24–25.

[66] *Orig. World* 107.3.

[67] See *Ap. John* NHC II,1:15.29–19.8.

[68] See Joseph Bidez and Franz Cumont, *Les mages hellenisés: Zoroastre, Ostanes et Hystaspe d'après la tradition grecque* (Paris: "Les Belles Lettres," 1938).

[69] In Hippolytus *Ref.* 5.26–27. Note the references to Omphale, Aphrodite, and Herakles at *Ref.* 5.26.28; to Priapus at *Ref.* 5.26.31; to Leda and Ganymede at *Ref.* 5.26.34.

[70] For Valentinus, see most recently Christoph Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?* (WUNT 65; Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck]) 1992.

they were, indeed, open to traditional and contemporary philosophy, either Platonic, Aristotelian, or Stoic,[71] but there is little hard evidence that these teachers read much beyond their classical literary and philosophical sources.

A first impression of the gnostics differs substantially from the pages of Plutarch or Clement. However different they may be from one another, Plutarch and Clement avowedly belong to a literary and philosophical tradition. Both assume knowledge of Homer and the classic poets, dramatists, and historians; both are professedly open to the "scientific" dimensions of the intellectual tradition based upon those classics. For Plutarch that openness resulted not only from reading, but also from contact with members of a profession devoted to "scientific" pursuits. The openness expressed itself in a curiosity, however superficial, about natural phenomena. For Clement that openness appears to have resulted more from a dedication to the classics and from an exegetical tradition than from a direct involvement with "men of science." His openness expressed itself not in curiosity, but in a continuation of the triumphalistic apologetic of his Jewish and Christian forebears. Gnostic literature, on the other hand, with the few exceptions mentioned, does not adopt an explicitly positive stand toward a classical tradition, and its aims are so otherwordly that investigating the natural world is irrelevant.

Despite the lack of explicit references to philosophical and scientific literature, in some gnostic texts cases of scientific knowledge may lurk beneath the surface. One interesting case is the reference to natural phenomena in the report on Basilides in Hippolytus, *Ref.* 7.20–27. Whatever its relationship to the "historical Basilides,"[72] the Hippolytean account affords an interesting document of second-century gnosticism, which at some points appeals to physical principles at least for purposes of illustration.

The Hippolytean account begins with a radically apophatic cosmogony. From a primordial nothingness (*Ref.* 7.20.2) the world finally

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[71] On Valentinus and his followers, see, e.g., H. W. Attridge, "Gnostic Platonism," *Proceedings of the Boston Area Colloquy on Ancient Philosophy 1991* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1992) 1–29.

[72] For a reconstruction of the position of Basilides based on the account in Irenaeus and the fragments found in Clement and Origen, see Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures*, 417–44. Layton (418 n. 2) reasonably suspects that the account in Hippolytus is possibly by a later follower of Basilides. For convenience, I shall refer to the author of the Hippolytean account as Basilides.

emerges by the mysterious production of a world seed. The imagery of the seed develops further:

> There was thus stored up in the seed everything that can be mentioned, or if it is not to be found can be left out, everything that was going to be suitable for the world that would arise from the seed, the world which of necessity at its own season expands by enlargement derived from a God so great and of such a kind. It is just as with a new-born child. We see how later the teeth and the paternal characteristics and the intelligence are acquired, and whatever else did not previously exist, but gradually comes to a man as he grows up from infancy.[73]

The text later alludes to Aristotle:

> This is the seed which contains within it the whole seed-mixture, which Aristotle says is the 'genus' which is divided into innumerable species, just as cow, horse, and man are subdivisions of 'animal' which does not exist. (*Ref.* 7.22.5)

The latter comment is clearly part of the analysis of Hippolytus, and it may be at least half right. The seed image, common in emanationist metaphysics, is hardly either a philosophical or a scientific principle. Yet the imagery used here, insisting on the "mixture" of all potentialities in a primordial entity, does evoke the physical principles of Anaxagoras, upon which Aristotle commented.[74] It may well be that this Basilides found material for his "organic" cosmogony in the fragments of Anaxagoras preserved in Aristotle. If so, Basilides would be another example of the classicism of the philosophical and literary circles of the second century.

Clement's account then describes how out of the primordial seed different types of entities emerge. As is common in Gnostic systems, soteriological and ecclesiological concerns come to expression in the cosmogony. Yet in the process the author invokes a physical principle:

> There was, says he, in the seed a threefold Sonship, in all respects the same in substance as the non-existent God, which came into being from the non-existent. Of this Sonship with its triple division, one part was light, another

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[73] *Ref.* 7.22.1. Translations are from Werner Foerster, *Gnosis* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1972). For Basilides, see vol. 1.59–83.

[74] See Aristotle *Physica* A4, 187a23ff.; *De caelo* G3, 302a28. In general see Geoffrey S. Kirk, John E. Raven, and Malcolm Schofiel, *The Presocratic Philosophers: A Critical History with a Selection of Texts* (2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

> coarse, and a third in need of purification. The light part, therefore, as soon as the seed was first deposited by the non-existent, was first to bubble up, and ascended and sped upwards from below with the swiftness which the poet describes as "like a wing or a thought" (Homer *Od.* 6.36). For every natural thing strives after him because of his extreme loveliness and beauty, one in one way, one in another.[75]

Several items deserve comment. The citation from Homer, if not the work of Hippolytus, evokes the literary tone of both Plutarch and Clement. The basic physical principle that elements have a natural place, familiar from Aristotle's *De caelo*, may be at work, although this Basilides is content with three rather than the Aristotelian five elements (earth, water, air, fire, and aether). For our author the payoff of the scheme is finally achieved when various human categories sort themselves out into the appropriate layers.[76] Finally, the appetition of all natural things for the transcendent God is more evocative of Plato's myth of the cave or Diotima's speech in the *Symposium* than to any scientific principle.

The cosmological account of Basilides continues, and the cosmos sorts itself into layers of reality. Hippolytus implies that these layers reflect the cosmology of the *De caelo*:

> Thus all the etherial things, which extend as far as the moon, are purposed and directed by the entelechy of the Great Ruler. For from there on the air is distinguished from the ether. So when all the etherial things had been set in order, another Ruler in turn arose from the world-seed, greater than all that lay below him, apart from the Sonship that had been left behind, but much inferior to the first Ruler. He also is called ineffable by them. This locality is called the Hebdomad and is the controller and creator of all that lies beneath.[77]

Although Clement tendentiously insinuates extra Aristotelian vocabulary (e.g., "entelechy") into the account of his Basilides, he is no doubt correct that the basic cosmological structure is compatible with Aristotle. Whether our author knows Aristotle directly or through handbooks is unclear. That he knows any scientific literature beyond Aristotle is highly unlikely.

Basilides, or Pseudo-Basilides, is not atypical, either for the texts from Nag Hammadi or for the reports in patristic sources. Certain

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[75] *Ref.* 7.22.7–8.
[76] See *Ref.* 7.27.1–2; 7.27.9.
[77] *Ref.* 7.24.3–4.

passages recall various physical principles, but they are seldom more than the commonplaces of the general philosophical tradition.

One further "scientific" subject invites investigation. Some gnostics at least were fascinated by numbers and their significance, in a way reminiscent of Plutarch, Clement, and Philo. The Valentinians in particular developed an elaborate numerical system to describe the structure of the supernal pleroma. In Irenaeus's account of the system of the Valentinian Ptolemy there appears an "architecture of the intelligible universe" into divided realms of 8, 10, and 12 "aeons" that emerge from a primordial Depth. Irenaeus explains this scheme:

> These are the thirty aeons of their erroneous system, concerning whom silence prevails and consequently they are not known. This is the invisible and spiritual Pleroma which is divided into three, namely an Ogdoad, a Decad, and a Duodecad. It was for this reason, they say, that the Savior—for they do not wish to call him Lord—did nothing in public for thirty years, thus setting forth the mystery of these aeons. In the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matt 20:1–16) these thirty aeons are clearly indicated, for some are sent about the first hour, others about the third, and others about the sixth, ninth and eleventh hours, and when the hours named are totalled up they make the number of thirty for 1+ 3 + 6 + 9 + 11 equals 30. By means of the hours they wish to see the aeons indicated.[78]

Several questions may be asked about this Valentinian numerology. The first has to do with the relationship of the basic triad of numbers 8, 10, 12 that defines the levels of the Pleroma through the hours of the parable. The connection between the cosmological schema and the parable seems to be tenuous at best, and the parable appears to offer a secondary justification, much in the spirit of the numerical speculation of Clement, for the cosmogonic numerical scheme. Whatever its significance, it is hardly the source for the 8-10-12 pattern.

The 8-10-12 sequence could be expressed as the simplest of the proportions discussed by Clement and Nichomachus of Gerasa, in which one number, the arithmetic mean, is common to both sides of the proportion (8 : 10 : : 10 : 12). A mathematician would not normally think of describing the proportion in these terms since they are not the simplest terms in which the ratios can be expressed. The equivalent proportion (4 : 5 : : 5 : 6), or the Nichomachean figure 4, 5, 6, does the trick nicely.

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[78] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 1.1.3.

The Nichomachean figure does not, of course, express the fundamental gender duality within each "aeon," so important to the Valentinians.

It is possible that the basic Valentinian cosmogony was generated according to a fundamental arithmetical principle analogous to those invoked by Clement of Alexandria. Yet the further bit of numerical speculation, associating 30 with the numbers in the parable, does not yield anything interesting to ancient number theory. Unlike the addends of 120 that fascinated Clement, the number of the hours in the parable does not amount to a number with a specific shape or with any interesting sequential properties. Had Valentinus and his friends wanted to play with the notion of heteromecic numbers, that is, numbers that, when expressed graphically, do not yield a simple geometric shape,[79] the figures supplied by the parable, which combine to form a heteromecic number 30, could have come in handy, but Valentinians apparently were not interested in pursuing that possibility. Even in arithmetic then, the most sophisticated gnostics stand at some distance from either traditional Platonists or from Christian apologists with Platonic interests.

Other Valentinians were not above playing with arithmetic, although in ways that would not be calculated to impress sophisticated contemporaries. Marcus "the magician," discussed in Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 1.13–21, enjoyed less than favorable repute with the bishop of Lyons largely because of his ritual practices, in which symbolic language and gestures involved suggestive sexual metaphors. Irenaeus also ridicules the teaching of Marcus, which apparently relied heavily on the mystical manipulation of letters and numbers. This kind of activity is certainly paralleled in later mystical traditions and was probably not new with Marcus. To get some flavor of his approach, consider the following passage which develops an exposition of the Valentinian Ogdoad:

> Thus Logos and Life have eight letters, man and Church seven, and the Father and Truth nine. On account of the one which was deficient, that which was extra in the Father came down, being sent to the one from whom he was separated, in order to set matters right, so that the unity of the aeons might possess equality and might produce in all the one power which is from all. And thus the seven achieved the power of eight, and the three groups became the same numerically, that is eights. These three, when added together, produce the number twenty-four. These three elements—from which flowed the twenty-four letters—exist, according to him, in conjunctions of the three powers, thus forming six, and being multiplied by

[79] *Introduction to Arithmetic* 2.17.

> the number of the ineffable Tetrad give rise to the same number, and these are said to belong to the Ineffable one. These are borne by the three powers, after the likeness of the Invisible: the images of these elements are the three double-letters, and if one adds these to the twenty-four letters, by the force of analogy, one arrives at the number thirty.[80]

The only similarity to the speculations of Philo or Clement at this point seems to be the fascination with addends; all else rests on gematria. Another passage illustrates the character of Marcus's mystical arithmetic:

> Jesus has the following unspeakable origin. From the mother of all things, the first Tetrad, there came forth, after the manner of a daughter, the second Tetrad, and that made up an Ogdoad, from which a Decad proceeded. Thus a Decad and an Ogdoad came into being. The Decad combined with the Ogdoad and multiplied it ten times and produced the number 80, and again 80 being multiplied ten times produced the number 800, so that the entire number that proceeds from the eight and the ten is 888, and this is Jesus. For the name Jesus, when calculated by the numerical value of the letters, amounts to 888.[81]

By the principles of gematria, Jesus is somehow equivalent to two of the highest principles, the sets of eight and ten "aeons" that form the uppermost (or innermost) layers of the Pleroma.

Numerology combined with some astrology enables Marcus to find correspondences between the visible universe and the structure of the intelligible world:

> First of all, they assert that the four elements, fire, water, earth, and air, were produced as images of the Tetrad above. If their characteristic effects —hot and cold, dry and moist—are added, then they form an exact image of the Ogdoad. Next, they count up ten powers in the following way: there are seven spherical bodies which they call heavens, then the sphere which contains them, and which they call the eighth heaven, and then the sun and the moon. These, numbering ten in all, are said to be images of the invisible Decad which proceeded from Logos and Life. They claim to see the Duodecad represented in the zodiac: for the twelve signs of the zodiac are considered by them to image forth very clearly the daughter of Man and Church, namely the Duodecad. Since the topmost heaven is linked with the resolution of the whole system, which is very rapid, and presses upon the (hollow)

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[80] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 1.14.5.

[81] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 1.15.2. The values of the letters in Ἰησοῦς are 10 + 8 + 200 + 70 + 400 + 200 = 888.

> sphere, thus providing a counterbalance to its speed by means of its own slowness, so that it completes in thirty years the cycle from one (zodiacal) sign to the next—they affirm that it is the image of Horos (Limit) which encircles the mother with the name of thirty. The moon, too, which travels through her heaven in thirty days, provides by means of these days an image of the number of the thirty aeons. The sun which makes its cycle in twelve months and completes its orbit by the same point expresses the Duodecad by means of the twelve months. And the days as well, each having twelve hours, are a type of the invisible Duodecad. Even the hour, the twelfth part of a day, is made up of thirty parts in order to be, in their view, the image of the Triacontad. And the zodiacal circle itself has a circumference of 360 degrees, each sign having thirty degrees. So they say that by means of this circle the image of the connection between the Duodecad and the Triacontad is preserved. The earth too, being divided, in their opinion, into twelve zones, receives in each zone a power from the heaven according to the perpendicular (that is, from the part of heaven which lies perpendicularly above) and brings forth productions which are like to the one who sends down the power as an influence—this, according to their firm assurance, is a type of Duodecad and its offspring.[82]

Like Platonists of all stripes, Marcus finds a correspondence between the ideal and the real, a correspondence that comes to expression "by the numbers." His appeal to "science," that is, to the basics of ancient astronomy and astrology, is in some significant ways like that of Clement, since it serves an apologetic function, but the mathematics are much less sophisticated. The numerical values, or at least some of the numerical values, associated with the phenomena of the visible heavens, confirm, because they replicate, the structure of the intelligible universe.

Gnostics, then, in comparison with the social and intellectual elite of their day, knew rather little of the wisdom of this world. Some, such as Clement, thought that they ought to have such knowledge, but what they did have came largely through exegesis and served apologetic ends. Embedded in the speculative systems of some other gnostics may lurk some traditional natural history and some of the arithmetic theory beloved of contemporary Platonists, but most were content with simpler numerological mysticism. Knowing the whence and whither of the self was what truly mattered.

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[82] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 1.17.1.

ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGNERS IN 2 MACCABEES, EUPOLEMUS, ESTHER, ARISTEAS, AND LUKE-ACTS*

David L. Balch

On the occasion of the baby John's circumcision, his father Zechariah is filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesies, blessing the Lord, the God of Israel, who has "looked favorably on his people (τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ) and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David,[1] . . . that we would be saved from our enemies (ἐξ ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν) and from the hand of all who hate us" (Luke 1:68–69, 71).[2] The Benedictus is followed by different emphases in the Nunc Dimittis: Simeon has seen God's salvation prepared in the presence of all peoples (πάντων τῶν λαῶν), a light for revelation to the Gentiles (ἐθνῶν), and for glory to your people Israel (λαοῦ σου Ἰσραήλ, Luke 2:31–32). These canticles in the gospel have connections not only to Maccabean emphases but also to the later speeches in Acts.[3]

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* An essay in gratitude and admiration for a mentor whose *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) has 200 pages surveying early Judaism. Prof. Ferguson in Abilene set a scholarly standard that I have not found surpassed in New York, Tübingen, Jerusalem, New Haven, or Rome.

[1] Cf. 1 Macc 4:30.

[2] P. Winter, "Magnificat and Benedictus—Maccabean Psalms?" *BJRL* 37 (1954–55) 328–47, and R. E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (2d ed.; New York: Doubleday, 1977, 1993) 349, 643–44, 649–50, interpret differently, but both see the clearest parallels to the Lucan canticles in 1 Maccabees, Judith, 2 Baruch, 4 Ezra, the Qumran Hodayoth, and the Qumran War Scroll. Cf. "Falling upon the steps before the altar, they implored him to be an enemy to their enemies and an adversary to their adversaries, as the law declares" (2 Macc 10:26; cf. 15:9), citing Exod 23:22 (Gerhard Delling, *Die Bewältigung der Diasporasituation durch das hellenistische Judentum* [Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1987] 27 n. 135; see n. 7 below).

[3] Cf. Brown, *Birth of the Messiah,* 347, 647, 659.

A. *2 Maccabees*

The theme, or topos,[4] of God's people and of their relationship to other ethnic/religious groups is woven through the narratives of both Luke-Acts and 2 Maccabees.[5] The orthodox (cf. Acts 15:1; 22:3) Christian apostle Peter phrases the problem sharply when he arrives at the house of a Roman centurion, Cornelius, in Caesarea and says, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with or to visit a Gentile . . . (ἀθέμιτόν ἐστιν ἀνδρὶ Ἰουδαίῳ κολλᾶσθαι ἢ προσέρχεσθαι ἀλλοφύλῳ,"[6] Acts 10:28b, NRSV). The final term occurs also in 2 Maccabees. When Maccabeus and his followers recovered the temple and city, "they tore down the altars that had been built in the public square by the foreigners (ὑπὸ ἀλλοφύλων)[7] . . . ; it happened that on

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[4] Cf. Robert Doran, *Temple Propaganda: The Purpose and Character of 2 Maccabees* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 1981) 47. Also Doran, "2 Maccabees and 'Tragic History,'" *HUCA* 50 (1979) 107–14 at 114: "2 Maccabees, too, is the history of a city and its territory and its defence by its patron deity. . . . One should not speak in terms of a genre, but rather of a topos."

[5] Christian Habicht, "2. Makkabäerbuch," *JSHRZ* 1 (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1979) 173–75, dates the source, Jason of Cyrene, between 161 or 160 and 152 BCE, therefore a contemporary of Judas the Maccabee, and the epitomizer to 124 BCE. Joseph Sievers, *The Hasmoneans and Their Supporters: From Mattathias to the Death of John Hyrcanus I* (SFSHJ 6; Atlanta: Scholars, 1990) 6, dates Jason's history between ca. 155 and ca. 106 BCE and the epitomizer between 124 BCE and 70 CE, probably in the first third of that time span (7 n. 28). Thomas Fischer, "Maccabees, Books of: B. The Second Book of Maccabees," *ABD* (1992) 4.442–50 at 443, places its origin in Egypt. Jan Willem van Henten, "2 Maccabees as a History of Liberation" (forthcoming in a volume tentatively entitled *Relations between Jews and Gentiles in the Second Temple, Mishna and Talmud Period* [ed. M. Mor, A. Oppenheimer, and D. R. Schwartz]) argues that the author wrote in Judea in 124 BCE (cf. n. 47).

[6] This term occurs 269 times in the LXX, very often for "Philistines" but also for "Greeks." See R. de Vaux, "Les Philistins dans la Septante," in *Wort, Lied und Gottesspruch. Beiträge zur Septuaginta*, Fs. Joseph Ziegler (Würzburg, 1972) 1.185–94. For the same term in Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Josephus, see Balch, "Paul in Acts: '. . .You teach all the Jews . . . to forsake Moses, telling them not to . . . observe the customs' (Act. 21,21)," *Panchaia*, Fs. Klaus Thraede (ed. M. Wacht; JAC Ergänzungsband 22; Münster: Aschendorf, 1995) 11–23 at 13–14.

[7] See the important discussion by Delling, *Diasporasituation*, 13–18. One must know, however, that Delling was a member of a German Christian institute founded by Walter Grundmann, the purpose of which was "die Entjudung von Kirche und Christentum." See Susannah Heschel, "Theologen für Hitler: Walter Grundmann und das 'Institut zur Erforschung und Beseitigung des jüdischen Einflusses auf das deutsche kirchliche Leben,'" in *Christlicher Antijudaismus und Antisemitismus: Theologische und kirchliche Programme Deutscher Christen* (ed. Leonore Siegele-Wenschkewitz; Arnoldshainer Texte; Frankfurt: Haag und Herchen, 1994) 125–70 at 139–40, and J. S.

the same day on which the sanctuary had been profaned by foreigners (ὑπὸ ἀλλυφύλων), the purification of the sanctuary took place" (10:2a, 5a).[8] The early reign of Antiochus IV Epiphanes is described in chapter 4: Jason bought the high priesthood and shifted his compatriots over to the Greek way of life (vs. 10).[9] "There was such an extreme of Hellenization and increase in the adoption of foreign ways (ἀκμή τις Ἑλληνισμοῦ καὶ πρόσβασις ἀλλοφυλισμοῦ) because of the surpassing wickedness of Jason, who was ungodly and no true high priest" (2 Macc 4:13). These foreign, Hellenistic ways are new customs: Jason "destroyed the lawful ways of living and introduced new customs contrary to the law" (τὰς μὲν νομίμους καταλύων πολιτείας παρανόμους ἐθισμοὺς ἐκαίνιζεν; v. 11).

I will pursue the theme/topos of τὰ ἔθνη and οἱ ἀλλόφυλλοι in 2 Maccabees and Luke-Acts. Given the theological climate of the past, some interpreters have argued or assumed that attitudes towards other ethnic groups are debated between Jews and Christians, the former with a uniformly negative attitude toward the Greeks, the latter with a uniformly positive, missionary attitude welcoming foreigners into the churches.[10] I will argue rather that a survey of sources contemporary with these documents reveals conflicts within both Judaism and Christianity concerning questions of ethnic alienation and/or integration and

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Vos, "Antijudaismus/Antisemitismus im *Theologischen Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 38 (1984) 89–110 at 91, 102.

[8] Werner Kappler and Robert Hanhart, *Septuaginta* 9/2, *Maccabaeorum liber II* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959). Cf. the decree of Antiochus III: "It is unlawful for any foreigner (ἀλλοφύλῳ) to enter the enclosure of the temple which is forbidden to the Jews, except to those of them who are accustomed to enter after purifying themselves in accordance with the law of the country" (Josephus *Ant.* 12.145, trans. Marcus in LCL).

[9] Cf. Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, vol. 1, *The Persian and Greek Periods* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 163–70, 246ff., and 256–58, on Jason and Menelaus. I limit this short paper to Greek sources written in and/or concerning Jerusalem in the Maccabean period; for Hebrew/Aramaic sources, e.g., Daniel and sections of 1 Enoch, see Grabbe.

[10] For example, Judith Lieu, "History and Theology in Christian Views of Judaism," in *The Jews among Pagans and Christians in the Roman Empire* (ed. J. Lieu, J. North, and T. Rajak; London: Routledge, 1992) 79–96 at 79 n. 1, quotes E. Schürer (1901, n. 703): "So sind die Juden immer mehr das geworden, was sie ihrem Wesen nach waren: Fremdlinge in der heidnischen Welt," strangers in a pagan world. A fascinating discussion of Christian evaluations of Judaism is Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) chaps. 2–3.

assimilation, an internal conflict which is typical in Greco-Roman urban society, for example, in Athens and Rome.[11]

I will survey some of this language concerning ethnic relationships in 2 Maccabees, Eupolemus, the Greek Additions to Esther, and the Letter of Aristeas, then discuss similar language in Luke-Acts. First, however, Parente observes that Alexander Janneus (103–76 BCE) was the first Hasmonean to mint coins, some of which have *Yehonatan ha melek* on the obverse, ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ, on the reverse.[12] In another case, his Greek name is inscribed in Hebrew letters: MLK'/ ALKSNDRWS (Meshorer Pl. 7 DaI). Such bilingualism in Jerusalem "presupponga una differenziazione ideologica."[13] Sievers[14] notes, however, that Meshorer and Parente have changed their minds: the Hasmonean who minted all these coins was John Hyrcanus I (160–143 BCE), not Alexander Jannaeus (103–76 BCE).

Images of the "other" reveal as much as or more about the writer and his or her social group than they do about the historical "others" imaged.[15] With this assumption, I will survey language in 2 Maccabees about τὰ ἔθνη. In a letter (2 Macc 1:10b–2:18) prefixed to the epitome but not by the same author,[16] a priestly prayer from the time of

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[11] Cf., e.g., Aelius Aristides, "Oration to Rome," 59–66, in *The Image of Rome* (ed. Erich S. Gruen; Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969) 145–46, and the debate in Dionysius cited n. 36 below.

[12] Fausto Parente, "Gerusalemme," in *Lo Spazio Letterario della Grecia Antica*, vol. 1, *La Produzione e la Circulazione del Testo* (ed. Giuseppe Cambiano et al., vol. 2, *L'ellenismo;* Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1992) 553–624 at 565–66, citing Y. Meshorer, *Ancient Jewish Coinage,* vol. 1, *Persian Period through Hasmonaeans* (New York: Amphora, 1982) Pl. 4 AaI. Cf. also Pl. 9 EAIe and Pl. 54 UI. Also Ya'akov Meshorer, *Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period* (Chicago: Argonaut, 1967) nos. 5, 5A, 7A, 8, 8B, 9, 30, 31, 36, 36A.

[13] Parente, 566, who surveys hellenization in Jerusalem before and after Alexander in literary and nonliterary sources, with significant bibliography.

[14] Sievers, *The Hasmoneans,* 153.

[15] Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989). See Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves* (New York: Columbia University, 1991). Cf. n. 22 below on the "historical" Antiochus IV.

[16] Doran, *Temple Propaganda,* 6–11. Parente, "Gerusalemme," 594, 600–602, observes that the first, genuine letter (1:1–10a) was written in Greek in Jerusalem; the second (2:13–15) refers to the collection of books that we now call "apocryphal" and "pseudepigraphical," probably including Esther (cf. 2 Macc 15:36), which later became canonical. See James A. Sanders, "Canon," *ABD* (1992) 1.837–52 at 840–42, 846, on Esther and the Maccabean books. Sanders agrees with Sundberg that there was no Alexandrian canon as such. The rabbis removed the Maccabean books from their writings. "The name [Maccabeus] never appears in rabbinic literature, and in fact it was

Nehemiah is recounted: "Gather together our scattered people, set free those who are slaves among the Gentiles (ἐλευθέρωσον τοὺς δουλεύοντας ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσι), look on those who are rejected and despised, and let the Gentiles (τὰ ἔθνη) know that you are our God" (1:27, NRSV). The epitomizer[17] recounts the suppression of Judaism by evil: "for the temple was filled with debauchery and reveling by the Gentiles, who dallied with prostitutes and had intercourse with women within the sacred precincts, and besides brought in things for sacrifice that were unfit" (7:4). Judas Maccabeus revolted, and Ptolemy, governor of Coelosyria and Phoenicia, sent Nicanor, "in command of no fewer than twenty thousand Gentiles of all nations (παμφύλων ἔθνη), to wipe out the whole race of Judea" (τὸ σύμπαν τῶν Ιουδαίων ἐξᾶραι γένος; 8:9b) and/or to sell them as slaves (v. 11).[18] But after the martyrdoms of chapters 6–7, the wrath of the Lord turned to mercy (8:5),[19] and the epitomizer narrates the response (8:1–10:8) to the assault of evil recounted in 4:1–7:42. Judas calls his forces together and exhorts them "not to fear the great multitude of Gentiles who were wickedly coming against them, but to fight nobly, keeping before their eyes the lawless outrage that the Gentiles had committed against the holy place, and the torture of the derided city, and besides the overthrow of their ancestral way of life" (8:16c–17). Judas defeats Nicanor, Antiochus dies, Maccabeus recovers the temple and city, purifies the sanctuary, and implores the Lord "that, if they should ever sin, they might be disciplined by him with forbearance and not be handed over to blasphemous and barbarous nations" (βλασφήμοις καὶ βαρβάροις ἔθνεσι, 10:4–5, "barbarous" said of "Greeks"!). Then the epitomizer narrates the repulse of further attacks on the temple (10:10–15:36), followed by peace.[20] Second Maccabees 11 presents genuine letters from these peace negotiations. Lysias came "against the Jews . . . to make the city a home for Greeks" (11:2), but makes peace. "Antiochus" writes the third letter

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the Christian church that preserved these books" (Uriel Rappaport and Paul L. Redditt, "Maccabeus," *ABD* [1992] 4.454).

[17] Doran, 22–23, disagreeing with Habicht ("2. Makkabäerbuch," 170, 173, 175–76), argues that chap. 7 is not a later insertion by a redactor of the epitome, but that the epitome is a unified piece.

[18] Judas later intends something similar for Joppa and Jamnia (12:7–9).

[19] Doran, 61, emphasizes this pivotal change, as does J. W. van Henten, "Das jüdische Selbstverständnis in den ältesten Martyrien," in *Die Entstehung der jüdischen Martyrologie* (ed. J. W. van Henten; Studia Post-Biblica; Leiden: Brill, 1989) 127–61 at 135.

[20] Doran, 63.

"to the nation" (Πρὸς δὲ τὸ ἔθνος, 11:27) with "our pledge of friendship and full permission for the Jews to enjoy their own food and laws, just as formerly, and none of them shall be molested in any way for what may have been done in ignorance" (11:30b–31). Doran follows Habicht[21] in assigning this letter to Antiochus IV's response to a mission of Menelaus in 165 or early in 164 BCE;[22] the epitomizer included it for apologetic reasons, wanting to show that Jews are not antisocial, haters of other nations, but only wish to follow their ancestral laws.[23] Judas also repulsed the attack of Antiochus V Eupator: "he ordered the people to call upon the Lord day and night, now if ever to help those who were on the point of being deprived of the law and their country and the holy temple, and not to let the people who had just begun to revive fall into the hands of the blasphemous Gentiles" (δυσφήμοις ἔθνεσιν; 13:10–11).

All perceptions of foreigners are, however, not negative. The high priest Menelaus stole some gold from the temple and had Onias killed, in response to which many of the people attacked Menelaus and his brother, Lysimachus, who was killed. Charges were brought against Menelaus, but due again to a bribe, the king acquitted him of the charges and sentenced his accusers to death. "Therefore even the Tyrians, showing their hatred of the crime, provided magnificently for their

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[21] Doran, 65–68, citing C. Habicht, "2 Makkabäerbuch," 177–85, who argues that the chronological order of the letters is 3, 1, 4, all from Antiochus IV in the year 165–64; letter 2 is from Antiochus V. Cf. E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California, 1984) 2.745–51.

[22] See Grabbe, *Judaism*, 1.249–50, on related reevaluations of Antiochus IV, concluding by citing Mørkholm; he was "not a zealous Hellenizer." Also Per Bilde et al., eds., *Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom* (SHC I; Aarhus: Aarhus University, 1990), esp. the articles by Niels Hyldahl and Shaye J. D. Cohen. J. Teixidor, "Interpretations and Misinterpretations of the East in Hellenistic Times," quotes Bickerman: "Not infected by the Christian zeal which later became the liberal itch, the Seleucids did not try to convert anybody—either to the true religion or good plumbing. They left people as dirty and blissful as they had been before the Macedonian conquest" (in Per Bilde, *Religion*, 77). Citations below from Lucian, Philo, and Favorinus (at nn. 31, 35, 38, all later than Antiochus IV) and the letter of Antiochus V (cited at nn. 21 and 32) raise the question whether Bickerman overstates the case. Cf. Susan Sherwin-White and Amélie Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis: A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), and Fergus Millar, "The Problem of Hellenistic Syria," in *Hellenism in the East: The Interaction of Greek and Non-Greek Civilizations from Syria to Central Asia after Alexander* (ed. A. Kuhrt and S. Sherwin-White; Berkeley: University of California, 1987) 110–33.

[23] Doran, 67 (cf. 60), parallel to a primary purpose of Luke-Acts (cf. my "Paul in Acts" cited n. 6).

funeral" (4:49). In another case, while Judas is winning victories, "the Jews who lived there bore witness to the goodwill that the people of Scythopolis had shown them and their kind treatment of them in times of misfortune; they thanked them and exhorted them to be well disposed to their race in the future also (12:30–31a). Third, Nicanor,[24] governor of Judea, who had orders to kill Judas, was nevertheless "warmly attached to the man" (14:24b). He advised him to marry and have children, which Judas did, settle down and share the common life (14:25), a theme that suits the apologetic aims of the book. Then, however, Nicanor turned against Judas (vss. 26–27) and threatened to destroy the temple, for which he received an exactly appropriate punishment.[25] Nicanor was initially goodwilled, but ultimately an ungodly man who "boastfully stretched out" his arm "against the holy house of the Almighty" (15:32; cf. 14:33). Momigliano concludes that, "although 2 Maccabees alludes to the Greeks as barbarians (2:21; 4:25; 5:22) and appears narrowly nationalistic in its religious perspective, it is not hostile to non-Jews as such."[26]

Second Maccabees uses various terms to designate other persons in the same ethnic group. Simon slandered Onias, the benefactor of the city, the protector of his compatriots (τῶν ὁμοεθνῶν), and a zealot for the laws (4:2b). Jason, brother of Onias, bribed Antiochus IV for the high priesthood, was replaced by Menelaus, then tried to regain control: "but Jason kept relentlessly slaughtering his compatriots (τῶν πολιτῶν[27] τῶν ἰδίων), not realizing that success at the cost of one's kindred (ὁμοεθνῶν) is the greatest misfortune" (5:6a). Judas Maccabeus,

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[24] On Nicanor, see Doran, *Temple Propaganda*, 58 n. 30, and Fischer, "Maccabees," *ABD* (1992) 4.443.

[25] Precisely commensurate divine punishment/providence is Stoic, not simply Deuteronomic historiography; see Balch, "The Areopagus Speech: An Appeal to the Stoic Historian Posidonius against Later Stoics and the Epicureans," *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. D. Balch, E. Ferguson, W. Meeks; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 52–79 at 58–67 citing Athenaeus, *Deip.* 6.266ef (Posidonius). Cf. 2 Macc 4:16, 42; 8:34–36; 9:5–7, 28; 11:13; 12:40–42; 13:5–8; 14:33 with 15:32–33.

[26] Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Second Book of Maccabees," *Essays on Ancient and Modern Judaism* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1994) 36–47 at 43. Antiochus IV condemned men "who would have been uncondemned if they had pleaded even before Scythians" (4:47). Ironically, see Lucian, "Anacharsis [a Scythian] or Athletics"; the Scythians reject Greek sports, the *gymnasion, ephebeia,* and *palaistra,* as does 2 Macc 4:9, 12, 14.

[27] Cf. Ceslas Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994) 3.124–33.

in contrast, "maintained his youthful goodwill towards his compatriots" (εὔνοιαν εἰς ὁμοεθνεῖς, 15:30b). The epitomizer wants to persuade the reader "that these punishments were designed not to destroy but to discipline our people" (τοῦ γένους[28] ἡμῶν, 6:12; cf. 7:38). They are "Hebrews" (7:31; 15:37) who are accused of "Judaism" (κρίσιν . . . Ἰουδαϊσμοῦ, 14:38). And finally, "in the case of other nations (ἀλλων ἐθνῶν), the Lord waits patiently to punish them . . . ; although he disciplines us with calamities, he does not forsake his own people" (τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λαόν, 6:14a, 16b).

While 2 Maccabees is not hostile to Gentiles as such, it is hostile to change from Jewish to Greek customs. The commandments (1:4; 2:2–3, 22; 4:2; 6:23; 7:2, 23, 30), including circumcision (6:10), the Sabbath (6:11; 15:1–3), not eating swine's flesh (6:18), and not wearing idols (12:40–41), are central.[29] Another identity symbol is speaking their own language (7:21; 12:37; 15:29).[30] In chapters 6–7 the king sends an Athenian senator "to compel the Jews to forsake (μεταβαίνειν) the laws of their ancestors and no longer to live (μὴ πολιτεύεσθε) by the laws of God" (6:1). "[T]he neighboring Greek cities . . . should kill those who did not choose to change over to Greek customs" (τοὺς δὲ μὴ προαιρουμένους μεταβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ κατασφάζειν, 6:9a; cf. 7:2).[31] Eleazar rejects pretending to eat pork, "for many of the young

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[28] Spicq, *Lexicon*, 1.301–7.

[29] These are both commands of God and cultural identity symbols. Bernard J. Siegel ("Defensive Structuring and Environmental Stress," *American Journal of Sociology* 76/1 [1970] 11–32, an article employed by J. H. Kaufman, "Boundary Maintenance and Cultural Assimilation of Contemporary Mennonites," *MQR* 51 [1977] 227–40) sheds light on the social (not the religious) function of such crucial cultural symbols.

[30] On the battle of languages, see J. P. V. D. Balsdon, *Romans and Aliens* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1979) chaps. 9 and 10 with bibliography, and A. Dihle, *Die Griechen und die Fremden* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1994) 144 n. 42. Parente, "Gerusalemme," 610–14, discusses the two Greek letters of Bar Kosiba discovered at Nahal Hever and rejects various proposed readings. But even with lacunae in the text, one must conclude that Greek was quite common and familiar in this nationalistic group. Cf. N. Lewis, *The Documents from the Bar Kokhba Period in the Cave of Letters: Greek Papyri* (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 1989).

[31] For voluntary hellenization and conversion, see Lucian, *The Scythian or the Consul*. "Anacharsis [a Scythian recently arrived in Greece] had no means of recognising Toxaris as a fellow-countryman (ὁμοεθνή), with his Greek garb, his shaven chin, his lack of belt or sword, his fluency of speech—one of the real Attic aborigines; so much had time changed (μετεπεποίητο) him" (3, trans. Kliburn in LCL). Toxaris had left (ἀπολιπών) wife and children in Scythia (4), and Anacharsis similarly becomes a disciple (ζηλωτής) longing for Greece (5). Toxaris says Anacharsis too will not remember wife or children (5) and has been willing to "leave all" (πάντα ἀφείς; 7).

might suppose that Eleazar in his ninetieth year had gone over to an alien religion" (μεταβεβηκέναι εἰς ἀλλοφυλισμόν, 6:24). "Antiochus . . . promised with oaths that he would make him [the youngest brother] rich and enviable if he would turn from the ways of his ancestors (μεταθέμενον ἀπὸ τῶν πατρίων)" (7:24b). The king writes his brother Lysias (11:22), "We have heard that the Jews do not consent to our father's change to Greek customs (Ἑλληνικὰ μεταθέσει), but prefer their own way of living and ask that their own customs be allowed them" (11:24).[32] But later Judas heard that they were about to be "deprived (στερεῖσθαι) of the law and their country and the holy temple" (13:10b) by Antiochus V, the author of the letter just quoted.

Such changes were discussed by Greek philosophers and narrated by Hellenistic[-Jewish] historians.[33] Josephus narrates a longer period of history than does 2 Maccabees, and there is discontinuity/change in history. Using the same terms, Josephus must narrate the "change" (μεταβολή) from an "aristocratic" constitution, government by judges, to a monarchic one under Saul (*Ant.* 6.35–39), in the context of which Samuel accuses the people of "great impiety" (μεγάλα ἠσεβήσατε, *Ant.* 6.88), of having "been traitors to His worship and His religion" (προδεδώκατε τὴν θρηκείαν καὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν, ibid., 90, trans. Thackeray and Marcus in LCL). The frightened people pray for forgiveness (ibid., 92–93). Both 2 Maccabees and Josephus are using common Greek political topoi. It is too simple merely to point out that 2 Maccabees opposes Hellenization, but employs both the Greek language and Greek political thought to do so. Logical contradiction is irrelevant and misleading as a social/historical category; human beings are not merely individuals and are more than minds. Second Maccabees does successfully encourage other Jews to maintain social and religious

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Cf. Lucian, *Toxaris* 5. Contrast Aristophanes' comedy *Thesmophoriazousae* 1082–135, where foreign, Scythian archers are a square peg in a round (Greek) hole. Their uncouth behavior, broken Greek, and reaction to women were open to derision. See Douglas M. MacDowell, *Aristophanes and Athens* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) 270–73, a reference for which I thank Prof. Martin Helzle. In fifth-century BCE Athens, Scythians were comedy; in first-century CE Roman Athens, they have become paradigms of acculturation—also for some Jews?

[32] On this second letter in chap. 11, the one from Antiochus V, see n. 21.

[33] H. Ryffel, *ΜΕΤΑΒΟΛΗ ΠΟΛΙΤΕΙΩΝ: Der Wandel der Staatsverfassungen* (Noctes Romanae 2; Bern: Paul Haupt, 1949), and David L. Balch, "The Greek Political Topos περὶ νόμων and Matthew 5:17, 19, and 16:19," in *Social History of the Matthean Community: Cross-Disciplinary Approaches* (ed. Balch; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991) 68–84 at 72–75.

distance from the dominant culture and religious value system; it employs Hellenistic political philosophy in order to persuade its minority group to maintain internal cohesiveness and alienation from foreign imperial culture.

The epitomizer employs another Greek political term which names this alienation, insisting on limited assimilation: "separation," the opposite of which is "mingling." "Now a certain Alcimus, who had formerly been high priest but had willfully defiled himself in the times of separation (ἐν τοῖς τῆς ἀμιξίας[34] χρόνοις), realized that there was no way for him to be safe or to have access again to the holy altar, and went to King Demetrius" (14:3–4a). Also, "in former times, when there was no mingling with the Gentiles (ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν χρόνοις τῆς ἀμιξίας), he [Razis, an elder of Jerusalem] had been accused of Judaism, and he had most zealously risked body and life for Judaism" (14:38). The political overtones of this debate are clear in Philo's eulogy of Augustus, "who reclaimed every state to liberty, who led disorder into order and brought gentle manners and harmony to all unsociable and brutish nations (τὰ ἄμικτα ἔθνη καὶ θηριώδη πάντα), who enlarged (παραυξήσας) Hellas by many a new Hellas and hellenized (ἀφελληνίσας) the outside world (βάρβαρον) in its most important regions, the guardian of the peace" (*Embassy to Gaius* 147, trans. Colson in LCL).[35] Philo's praise of Augustus for bringing liberty and harmony to these unsociable nations is a positive way of saying he conquered them militarily and culturally, which Philo explicitly connects to hellenization, to his repeatedly creating another new Hellas, precisely what the author of 2 Maccabees opposes.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus summarizes his history of the ethnic origins of Rome as follows:

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[34] L' 58 311 La [-BM] Sy read ἐπιμιξίας, "mixing" (Hanhart). Liddell-Scott-Jones refer to Thucydides 1.3.4, an enlightening passage from the fifth century BCE; also Isocrates 6.67; Lucian *Timon or the Misanthrope* 42. G. Delling, "Philons Enkomion auf Augustus," *Klio* 54 (1972) 171–92 at 182–84, gives Philo *De virt.* 141 (accusation of misanthropy); *De spec. leg.* 2.16; Josephus *Ant.* 11.212, again an accusation against the Jews. See also Balch, "Paul in Acts" (n. 6) 15, and E. Bickerman, *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (Leiden: Brill, 1976) 272 with n. 77. This is the language of eulogy, accusation, and apologetic.

[35] Delling, "Philons Enkomion auf Augustus," 188, observes that Philo wrote when Caligula, Augustus's opposite, had just died and intended the encomium to image a good ruler for the new emperor, Claudius, who Delling suggests (192) was indeed more like Augustus in his later Letter to Alexandria.

> "Their kings setting the example, united (μίξαντες) the excellence of the two races, the native and the foreign, by ties of marriage . . . combining in a very brief time their *customs, laws and religious ceremonies* . . . becoming intermingled together in the wars they jointly waged, and all calling themselves by the common name of Latins . . . shared in a common life." (Dionysius *Ant. Rom.* 1.60.2–3, trans. Cary in LCL)

Dionysius can also apologize for mingling: "But the admixtures of the barbarians (βαρβάρων ἐπιμιξίαι) with the Romans, by which the city forgot many of its ancient institutions, happened at a later time" (1.89.3; cf. 90.1). Similarly, Romans are accused of having been "corrupted by various admixtures of foreigners" (ἐπιμιξίαις τοῦ ἀλλοφύλου, 3.11.3), but the apologetic response is that this humane (φιλανθρωπίαν) policy is responsible for Rome's growth from a small to a large and formidable state that rules others, that can do good to its friends and harm its enemies by its larger army (3.11.5–9).[36] According to Habicht's dating, Dionysius writes a century later than Jason's epitomizer, but according to Sievers, they might be closer. Dionysius praises "mingling" in some circumstances, but both historians oppose ethnic mingling that results in forgetting ancient institutions.

Lucian's "Parliament (ἐκκλησία!) of the Gods" (trans. Harmon in LCL) parodies the perceived civic problem, transferring it to heaven. Zeus complains that many resident aliens and foreigners (ξένοι) "share our table who are not worthy" (1), feasting with the gods on equal terms and sharing in sacrifices (3). But Momus charges that Zeus himself is the problem, "who began these illegalities and caused the corruption of our body politic by cohabiting (ἐπιμιγνύμενος" [the stem translated "mingling" in a political context, a sexual metaphor]) with mortal women and . . . you have filled heaven with these—demigods! (7) Now Mithras the Mede "who does not even speak Greek" (οὐδὲ ἑλληνίζων τῇ φωνῇ), a slave, that "dog-faced, linen-vested Egyptian," ibises and monkeys have obtained fraudulent admission to divinity (9). There are many with outlandish names (ξένα ὀνόματα, 13), "aliens, not only Greeks but barbarians, in nowise worthy of admission to our body politic," a polyglot (πολυγλώσσων) rabble, contrary to all the institutions of our

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[36] Cf. J. P. V. D. Balsdon, "Dionysius on Romulus: A Political Pamphlet?" *JRS* 61 (1971) 18–27 at 20. F. W. Walbank, "Nationality as a Factor in Roman History," *Selected Papers: Studies in Greek and Roman History and Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1985) 57–76. E. Gabba, *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome* (Berkeley: University of California, 1991) 208–10.

fathers (παρὰ πάντα τὰ πάτρια), who have gained admission to heaven [Rome! or Athens or Corinth or Antioch or Jerusalem] (14). The comedy of Lucian's dialogue assumes that Romans/Greeks anywhere would recognize the joke, that they are immediately familiar with the urban tensions generated by "screwing" with foreigners.[37]

A text among Dio Chrysostom's orations, perhaps by Favorinus from Arles, who studied Greek in Marseilles, so was himself a provincial who made good in Athens, Corinth, and Rome in the time of Hadrian, praises the benefits of hellenization. His world is dualistic: he is a lover of Hellas (φιλέλληνες), justice, and freedom, a hater of villainy, tyranny, and barbarians (μισοβάρβαροι, pseudo-Dio, 37.17–18), a dualism as absolute as that of the Greek Additions to Esther discussed below. This Roman claims to know "not merely the language, but also the thought and manners (δίαιταν) and dress of the Greeks" (ibid., 25, trans. Crosby in LCL), and wants "not only to seem Greek but to be Greek."

> "[T]hough Roman, he has become thoroughly hellenized (ἀφηλληνίσθη), even as your own city [Corinth] has; in Athens because he is Athenian in his speech; in Sparta because he is devoted to athletics; in all cities everywhere because he pursues the study of wisdom and already has not only roused many of the Greeks to follow that pursuit with him but also attracted (ἐπεσπάσατο) even many of the barbarians. . . . No one even of the barbarians may despair of attaining the culture of Greece when he looks upon this man" (pseudo-Dio, 37.26–27).[38]

Lucian, Philo, and Favorinus, all of whom are quoted above praising hellenization, are provincials, not Greeks by birth; thus they belong to the social group of Hellenizers described by Mendels,[39] like Jason and Menelaus, hellenizers in Jerusalem, but unlike Antiochus IV and V, Israel's Greek rulers.

In summary, foreigners built altars to Zeus in the Jerusalem temple of the one imageless God, and hellenizing aristocratic Jewish high priests changed the ethnic/religious customs of the group to a new, Greek way of life. Evil suppresses Judaism; the temple of God is filled with prostitutes and unfit sacrifices. Judas Maccabeus revolts, to which

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[37] Cf. Josephus *Ant.* 4.131–58, 183, 228 ("pure" is "without mixture").

[38] Cited in Delling, 183.

[39] Doron Mendels, *The Rise and Fall of Jewish Nationalism* (Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 17–26, sees three strata of society: 1) the indigenous population, 2) Greek rulers and settlers, and 3) "Hellenists," the stratum of society in which people from the other social groups were able to mingle (17).

the ruler responds by an army of all nations intent on holocaust. Judas successfully halts the overthrow of the Mosaic way of life, so that Jews are not handed over to the blasphemous, barbarous nations, and in the peace negotiations, Antiochus IV (inconceivable to the epitomizer, who assumes this genuine letter is from Antiochus V) agrees that the Jews may continue to enjoy their own food and laws. There are a few positive images of foreigners, when they support Jews' rights to their own way of life, but even then, like Nicanor, these foreigners may change from goodwilled to murderous and blasphemous. Second Maccabees is hostile to complete hellenization, although not to all: the epitomizer writes in Greek using Greek political conceptions of ethnic identity and change as well as Stoic conceptions of providential recompense. But cultural/ religious identity symbols, including language, must not be abandoned or changed, as native, aristocratic, urban hellenizers want. Jews should remain separate, not mingle with Greeks, an unacceptable level of assimilation that would destroy ancient laws and customs.

B. *Eupolemus*

Eupolemus,[40] who wrote in Greek *in Jerusalem* in the mid-second century BCE,[41] gives very different accents. Most conclude that the author is mentioned in 1 Macc 8:17, "so Judas chose Eupolemus son of John son of Accos . . . and sent them to Rome to establish friendship and alliance." "John the father of Eupolemus" had won concessions from Antiochus III (2 Macc 4:11), a passage which may assume that the readers are familiar with the son. He may have been the first in his family to acquire a Greek name.[42] Habicht suggests[43] that this

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[40] Text, translation, and notes in Carl R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors,* vol. 1: *Historians* (SBLTT 20; Chico, CA: Scholars, 1983) 93–156.

[41] Holladay, 93. Parente, "Gerusalemme," dates the embassy to Rome in 161 BCE, Eupolemus's book in 158/57 or 159/58 (589; cf. pp. 580–82, 584, 588–91); therefore, Eupolemus emphasizes Moses and the temple shortly after the hellenizing crisis in Jerusalem. Cf. Nikolaus Walter, *Historische und legendarische Erzählungen: Fragmente jüdisch-hellenistischer Historiker* (JSHRZ 1; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1980) 92, 95. Sievers, *Hasmoneans,* 69, concludes that the Maccabean revolt attracted some "aristocrats with considerable knowledge of Greek speech and manners, . . . some moderate Hellenizers."

[42] John R. Bartlett, *Jews in the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1985) 57.

[43] Habicht, *2. Makkabäerbuch,* 177–78.

Eupolemus might be a source for 2 Maccabees, Bartlett that he might have been one of the authors of the letter in 2 Macc 1:10–2:18.[44] The fragments belong to the genre of haggadah, as do Jubilees, the Genesis Apocryphon, and Pseudo-Philo, *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*; he combines this narrative genre with Alexandrian chronology and uses the LXX.[45] Bartlett suggests that he wrote for a largely non-Jewish readership, and he is indeed quoted by Alexander Polyhistor. This ambassador presents his people in a favorable light for foreigners.

Moses discovered the alphabet; therefore, Jews are the source of wisdom for the Greeks (frg. 1). David and Solomon subdue those regions ruled in Eupolemus's day by the Ptolemies and Seleucids (frg. 2). Solomon is a "friend" of the king of Egypt and the king of Tyre, to whom he writes letters referring to "the Most High God" who "commanded me to build a temple to the God who created heaven and earth" (trans. Holladay, 119, 121). Both write in return, acknowledging God and acceding to Solomon's requests for help building the temple. These "nations (τὰ ἔθνη) supplied the labor" for the temple (frg. 2.34.4), after which "Solomon returned the Egyptians and the Phoenicians each to their own countries" (frg. 2.34.17; Holladay, 125, 131). Like 2 Maccabees, Eupolemus narrates that the sacrificing to an idol by the Jews is disastrous (frg. 4), although our remaining short fragments do not mention circumcision, the Sabbath, or kosher food.

Second Maccabees and Eupolemus both focus their narratives on the temple, but their stories about foreigners, the nations, differ. In 2 Maccabees we hear about many foreigners who are blasphemous, barbarous, murderous, licentious, who bring prostitutes and pork into the temple and are intent on murdering all Jews, but in Eupolemus about nations who help build the temple and celebrate Solomon, approved by so great a God (frg. 2.32.1).[46] Hasmoneans in Jerusalem narrated very different

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[44] Bartlett, 58; cf. n. 15. I disagree with Bartlett. The attitude toward the nations in 2 Macc 1:27 is incompatible with Eupolemus.

[45] Parente, 589–91, and esp. Walter, *Fragmente*, 95, who cites Ben Zion Wacholder, "Biblical Chronology in the Hellenistic World Chronicles," *HTR* 61 (1968) 451–81 at 461–62 on Eupolemus, frg. 5. Cf. Holladay, *Fragments*, 99 n. 3; 101 n. 15, and P. W. van der Horst, "The Interpretation of the Bible by the Minor Hellenistic Jewish Authors," in *Mikra: Text, Translation, Reading and Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Martin Jan Mulder; CRINT 2/1; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988 and 1990) 519–46 at 537–40.

[46] For critique of the temple by a Jew aware of Posidonian ideas (according to A. D. Nock, "Posidonius," *JRS* 49 [1959] 1–15 at 5–9), see Strabo *Geog.* 16.2.35–39; cf. M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy

legends about foreigners. Maccabeans generated conflicting images of the other, just as they minted bilingual coins.

C. *Greek Additions to Esther*

This ambivalence is also present in the bilingual book of Esther. The Greek Esther is concluded by a colophon which assigns it to Lysimachus and dates it to 78–77 BCE in Jerusalem. The colophon also assumes that the Hebrew Esther was still unknown in Alexandria, which would then have been written a little earlier: Bickerman suggests about 100 BCE in the reign of Alexander Jannaeus.[47] Apollonius Molon wrote "Against the Jews" about the date of the Greek Esther, and the first pogroms we know occurred then in Alexandria and Antioch.

Bickerman cautions[48] about naively labeling any of these books pro-gentile or anti-gentile. The authors believed that God protects the chosen people. There was no essential conflict between Jews and Greeks (e.g., 2 Macc 12:30; 3 Macc 3:8; Esth 9:15); on the other hand, Esther, especially Additions A and F, could excite animosity among Gentiles (*Megillah* 7a).[49] The themes concerning foreigners are similar to 2 Maccabees, although more alienated.

Evil suppresses Judaism, but going beyond 2 Maccabees, the Greek "interpreter"/translator (F11) of Esther emphasizes that Gentiles plan utterly to destroy all Jews (Esth A6; 3:6–7, 13; B6; 3:14; 4:1, 7–8; C8, C10, C20; 8:5; E15, E21, E23; 9:24; F5; cf. 9:2, 12, 16; also 2 Macc 8:9).[50] Being Jewish (Ἰουδαῖος) is problematic (3:4; 4:13; 5:9, 13; cf.

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of Sciences and Humanities, 1974) 1.261–67 and #115, pp. 294–311.

[47] Parente, 602; Elias Bickerman, "The Colophon of the Greek Book of Esther," in *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* (AGJU 9; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976) 225–45 at 232, 239–40, and "Notes on the Greek Book of Esther," ibid., 246–74 at 252, 258. If the epitomizer of 2 Maccabees knew Esther (cf. nn. 5 and 15), Bickermann's dating of the latter means that Habicht dates 2 Maccabees too early. Further, if the Greek Esther originated in Jerusalem as its colophon claims (cf. Bickerman, 240, 244), the possibility that 2 Maccabees might have been redacted there is higher. Carey A. Moore, *Daniel, Esther and Jeremiah: The Additions* (AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1977) 154, 166, distinguishes the flowery Greek rhetoric of Additions B and E from the others, which he thinks may have originated in Judea.

[48] Ibid., 268–74 at 274.

[49] Ibid., 243 n. 100. "Lysimachus made of the Greek Esther a document stressing mutual hatred between the Jews and the Gentiles," but under Alexander Jannaeus "the simple dichotomy of his book was already out of fashion" (Bickerman, 243, 268).

[50] Text in R. Hanhart, ed., *Esther* (Septuaginta 8/3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck &

6:10, 13; 8:7), for this nation differs from all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, 3:8; B5), a "mingling" (ἀναμεμίχθαι, B4) with a difference. The conflict no longer focuses on specific customs such as refusal to eat pork offered to Zeus, but concerns being Jewish as such. Haman is a slanderer (διάβολος, 7:4) of Jews.[51] The apologetic response is that Jews are not evildoers (κακούργους, E15).[52] In the Hebrew Esther, the possibility of extermination had been an historical accident, the result of an all-powerful despot who agrees to the wish of an advisor without even knowing the victims.[53] The Greek Additions dramatically increase the emphasis on slander, threatened holocaust, and denial of more generalized anti-Jewish accusations, not ones focusing on symbolic actions such as the Maccabean martyrs' refusal to eat pork.

There is an announcement in all languages either that the Jews are to be destroyed (Esth 3:12–13) or helped (4:14; C14; 8:9; cf. 9:26, "their own language" and "help," cf. 2 Macc 1:24–25).

The nation (τὸ γένος, 2:10; 3:7) or people (ὁ λαός, A17; 7:3) is central. The author confesses hatred of the lawless and uncircumcised, of every stranger (παντὸς ἀλλοτρίου, C26). Haman is a Macedonian (E10 and E14; 9:24), an alien (ἀλλότριος, E10), differing from the philanthropic nation (ἔθνος φιλανθρωπίας, E11) of the Persian [=Egyptian/Ptolemaic?] king.

Mordecai prays to God to be propitious and change mourning to gladness (C10; E21; 9:22), a reversal in the history of the Jews that is strikingly similar to the literary structure of 2 Maccabees (8:5).[54]

Another familiar theme from 2 Maccabees is that Esther, a "delicate female" (D3; cf. 2 Macc 7:21; 4 Macc 4:25; 7:24; 14:11), nevertheless did not change (οὐ μετήλλαξε) her way of life (2:20),[55] but God did

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Ruprecht, 1966).

[51] Haman is finally crucified (7:9; 8:7; E18; cf. 9:13–14), an exact, worthy recompense (E18; 9:25), Stoic historiography again (cf. n. 25). Strikingly, the people of Susa rejoice at the Jews' deliverance (8:15).

[52] The presentation of both sides of the debate is new in Jewish historiography (Bickerman, 263).

[53] Bickerman, 265.

[54] Doran, *Temple Propaganda*, 54, with n. 19: "a watershed in the narrative of 2 Maccabees." Cf. van Henten, "2 Maccabees as a History of Liberation" (n. 5) and n. 18 above.

[55] Bickerman, 261, observes that she could not have been observant. She denies engaging in symposia (Esth C28; contrast Ep. Arist. 286). Shimon Applebaum, *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times: Historical and Archaeological Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 1989) 31, quotes Eccl 2:4–9 to illustrate Greek cultural influence in Judean cities in the

change (μετέβαλεν, D8) the spirit of the king to gentleness before her. The translator does have some Jews confess the sin of idolatry (C17, C19). God alone (μόνος, C14; cf. 2 Macc 7:38) is God, the living God (Esth 6:13; E16; cf. 2 Macc 15:4).

As in 2 Macc 11:24 (letter of Antiochus V) and 11:30b–31 (letter of Antiochus IV), the Persian king eventually commands Jews to use their own laws (Esth 8:11 and in the Additional king's letter, E19), precisely what contemporary apologists seek.

Just as the proud (2 Macc 9:4, 12; cf. Esth A10; 3:1; 4:8; C5, C13, C27; 6:13; 8:35; cf. Ep. Arist. 263) Antiochus IV is humbled and vows to become a Jew himself (2 Macc 9:17), so many Gentiles of Susa were circumcised and became Jews (Esth 8:17).[56]

In summary, in the context of the earliest pogroms and literary anti-Judaism we know, the Greek Additions to Esther exhibit and generate further polarization between Jews and Gentiles. Holocaust threatens; the distance between Jews and others (Macedonians) approaches total alienation (e. g., in C26 = English Add. Esth 14:15). The author reflects contemporary apologetic efforts to deny that Jews as such are evildoers. Still, the writers express hope and pray that God will reverse history, as in 2 Maccabees 8, and some Gentiles convert. The conception and experience of foreigners in the Hebrew Esther differ from that in the Greek Additions, and both differ dramatically from Eupolemus, Judas Maccabeas's ambassador to Rome, who also wrote after an intense crisis, projecting different images of outsiders. Jewish literature from Jerusalem in the Maccabean age exhibits a spectrum of alienation from and/or integration with hellenistic culture, persons, and rulers.

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third century BCE.

[56] Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Religion, Ethnicity, and 'Hellenism' in the Emergence of Jewish Identity in Maccabean Palestine," in *Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom* (ed. Per Bilde; Aarhus: Aarhus University, 1990) 204–23 at 210 mentions Esth 9:27 and Judith 14:10, not 2 Macc 9:17. Cf. his "Was Judaism in Antiquity a Missionary Religion?" in *Jewish Assimilation, Acculturation and Accommodation: Past Traditions, Current Issues and Future Prospects* (ed. Menachem Mor; Lanham: University Press of America, 1992) 14–23.

D. *Letter of Aristeas to Philocrates*

Dates assigned the Letter of Aristeas differ from 250 BCE to CE 100. Shutt supposed 170 BCE in Alexandria,[57] Bickerman 130 BCE,[58] Meisner 127–118 BCE.[59] Tcherikover denied that it is a letter of propaganda directed to Greeks, insisting rather that it was written by a Jewish author learned in philosophical literature to Jewish readers.[60]

The high priest Eleazar (3) chooses seventy-two Jerusalem elders as translators of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, elders who know both Jewish and Greek literature (121). They had "the middle way as their commendable ideal; they forsook any uncouth and uncultured attitude of mind (τὸ τραχὺ καὶ βάρβαρον τῆς διανοίας); in the same way they rose above conceit and contempt (ὑπερφρονεῖν) of other people" (122). Tcherikover agrees that the author here defends the elders of Jerusalem who know Greek culture and criticizes the Hasidim,[61] analogous to the differentiation in Jerusalem discussed above between Eupolemus the ambassador (cf. *Ep. Arist.* 122) and the Greek Additions to Esther. As in Eupolemus, in the Letter of Aristeas the high priest in Jerusalem is a true friend of King Ptolemy and Queen Arinoe and the children (41; cf. 318), who cherish piety for "our God" to the extent that they give silver to repair the temple (42) and recognize the "holy words" of Torah (31, 177). The high priest "sends" these elders/ambassadors "for the common benefit of all his countrymen" (126).

The author's aim is to encourage Jews to accept Greek culture (2, 6–7, 121, 124, 321–22) and to deny that there is an abyss between the two, even in theology.[62] Hellenistic culture is presented as monotheistic,

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[57] R. J. H. Shutt, "Letter of Aristeas," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (ed. James H. Charlesworth; Garden City: Doubleday, 1985) 2.7–34 at 8–9, whose translation is employed below. The text is in A. Pelletier, *Lettre d'Aristée à Philocrate* (SC 89; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1962).

[58] Bickerman, *Studies in Jewish and Christian History* 1.228, accepted by V. Tcherikover, "The Ideology of the Letter of Aristeas," *HTR* 51 (1958) 59–85, now in *Studies in the Septuagint: Origins, Recensions, and Interpretations. Selected Essays with a Prolegomenon* (ed. Sidney Jellicoe; New York: Ktav, 1974) 181–207 at 60 n. 9.

[59] Norbert Meisner, "Aristeasbrief," *JSHRZ* 2/1 (1977) 35–87 at 43. Bartlett, *Jews in the Hellenistic World*, 17, places it in the middle of the second century BCE.

[60] Tcherikover, 62, 66, 83; Bartlett, *Jews*, 12.

[61] Tcherikover, 67–68, 83.

[62] Tcherikover, 69. Meisner, 43, suggests that the author also wants to distance Alexandrian Jews from the Onias temple in Leontopolis. W. C. van Unnik, *Das Selbstverständnis der jüdischen Diaspora in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit* (ed. P. W. van

without any attempt to emphasize its moral and religious depravity. Aristeas, the Jewish author disguising himself literarily as a Greek (40), takes the opportunity to ask Ptolemy II (285–247 BCE) to release 100,000 Jewish slaves, describing the king and God as follows:

> As a man of mature and generous mind, release the men confined under such hardships. The same God who gave the Jews their Law is the one who directs your kingdom . . . for the God who watches over and creates all things is the God whom they worship, the God whom all men worship, the God whom we ourselves worship, your Royal Highness, except that we address him by other names such as Zeus and Dis (15–16; cf. 19, 37, 189).[63]

Similarly in the symposium (187–294), even though the word "God" appears in all seventy-two answers, there is no trace of Jewish elements. Judaism is a monotheistic philosophy without national and historical aspects.[64]

The main passage on Torah concerns kosher food (128–72), although he also opposes idols (135). Regulations concerning forbidden food are mere allegories given by Moses in a symbolic manner (τροπολογῶν, 150), which have a profound meaning (λόγον βαθύν, 143).[65] Moses was not concerned for mice and the weasel (144). Birds which may be eaten are pure since they feed on grain, whereas forbidden, unclean ones are birds of prey, a distinction that promotes righteousness and discourages violence against others (147–48). The prescription concerning animals "chewing the cud and parting the hoof" (Lev 11:3!) was given with a view to truth, "a token of right reason" (161). Philo writes similarly a century and a half later.[66]

The Torah should be in a universal language, Greek. The translation is accomplished by Jerusalem Jews and approved in Alexandria; it should not be changed (311). Previous translations are misleading; only the LXX is authentic (312–15). Current copies of the Hebrew Bible are liable to corruption since they have not received attention by

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der Horst; Leiden: Brill, 1993), argues that Jewish attitudes to the diaspora were consistently negative, but he nowhere discusses the Letter of Aristeas. Cf. the discussion in Shaye J. D. Cohen and E. S. Frerichs, eds., *Diasporas in Antiquity* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1993).

[63] Trans. Bartlett, *Jews*, 14. Quoted also in Boyarin, *The Radical Jew*, 58, in his section on "Greco-Roman Judaism and the Problem of Universalism."

[64] Tcherikover, 70–71.

[65] Cf. David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California, 1992).

[66] Tcherikover, 72–73.

Alexandrian librarians (30).[67] The Septuagint is once preferred to the original Hebrew text (57),[68] a contrast to the method of the grandson of Sirach, translator and author of the prologue to his grandfather's book of wisdom.

The Holy Land is ideal, and its center Jerusalem, the temple, its high priest, and the religious service, the heart of Aristeas's interest (83–120). Tcherikover suggests that this is not Hasmonean Judea, but the pure Holy Land, the Land as part of Torah.[69] Torah opens a gate to the world of culture, even if it leads to isolation of the Jews from other nations. Eleazar, the high priest, explains:

> In his wisdom the legislator . . . surrounded us with unbroken palisades and iron walls to prevent our mixing with any of the other peoples in any matter (μηθενὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐθνῶν ἐπιμισγώμεθα κατὰ μηδέν), being thus kept pure in body and soul, preserved from false (ματαίων) beliefs, and worshipping the only God omnipotent over all creation. Hence the leading priests among the Egyptians . . . gave us the title "men of God," which is ascribed exclusively to those who worship the true God, and not to those who are concerned with meat and drink and clothes, their whole attitude (to life) being concentrated on those concerns. Such concerns are of no account among the people of our race (139–41; cf. 151–52).

Thus Judaism is essentially a philosophical belief; matters of food and drink are ancillary (cf. 128, 140, 142, 144; but cf. 158, 169, and esp. 182, "apologetic" [170] remarks probably to insiders).[70]

God blesses the human race" (190; cf. 205, 210), and one elder advises the king to "have regard to the method of God. For the prayers of the deserving are fulfilled, but to those who fail . . . God does not smite them in proportion to their offenses nor by the greatness of his strength, but exercises clemency" (192; contrast 2 Macc 6:12–17). When the king asks about "the heterogeneous multitudes (παμμιγῶν ὄχλων) in his kingdom, how he might be in harmony with them, a Jerusalem elder advises him to adopt "the role appropriate to each one," doing justice and using sound reasoning (267).

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[67] Bickerman, 228.

[68] Moses Hadas, *Aristeas to Philocrates (Letter of Aristeas)* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951) 122 n. 57.

[69] Tcherikover, 78–79; Meisner, 42.

[70] Hadas, *Aristeas*, 157, suggests that this may be a specific reply to charges seen in Esth 3:8 and 3 Macc 3:4.

Tcherikover concludes that this is not assimilation, but an opening to the world of culture. Key customs—circumcision, Sabbath, kosher foods—are not threatened and do not need defending. Anti-semitism had not yet blocked the way to cultural emancipation; life in Alexandria appeared tranquil and safe.[71]

In summary, an Alexandrian Jewish author encourages knowledge of both Hebrew and Greek culture, disparaging (possibly Hasidic, possibly some Maccabean) negative attitudes in Jerusalem toward others, a contrast to the Greek Additions to Esther. Jews and Greeks worship the same God, whom the latter name Zeus, an attitude close to that of Eupolemus, who narrates Solomon and the kings of Syria and Egypt praising the same one God. Discussing passages in Torah concerning kosher food, the author de-emphasizes "meat, drink, and clothes," a qualitative contrast to 2 Maccabees. The Bible should be in Greek, and a Septuagint reading is once preferred to the Hebrew, a contrast with the method of Ben Sirach's grandson. God blesses the human race and fulfills the prayers of the deserving, a universalism which is another contrast with 2 Maccabees. Nevertheless, Aristeas assumes that Jews are not "mingling" with any other peoples.

This sketch yields the conclusion that there was a spectrum of attitudes in Maccabean Jerusalem concerning relationships with foreigners, a spectrum from left to right that includes the following: 1) The *Epistle of Aristeas*—whose narrative concerns but was not written in Jerusalem—understands the high priest and Ptolemy to worship the same God, the latter calling God Zeus, and de-emphasizes and transforms the meaning of distinctive customs such as kosher foods, with one result that Jews and Gentiles may associate in a symposium. Judaism is a philosophy, not a practice focused on food and drink. 2) Eupolemus likewise pictures rulers in Jerusalem and Alexandria honoring the same God, including the latter sending "the nations" to help construct the Jerusalem temple. 3) Second Maccabees's story characterizes most foreigners as hellenizing polytheists who intrude pork and prostitutes into the temple, the Jewish alternative to which is martyrdom or war. 4) Additions A and F to Esther distinguish Jews totally from others, who are perceived as intent on destroying all Jews. Given this spectrum, it would be mistaken to write in the singular of the Maccabean, or even more of the Jewish, attitude toward foreigners.

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[71] Tcherikover, 85.

E. *Luke-Acts*

The agenda of this paper is to argue that Luke-Acts belongs within this Maccabean/Jewish debate, a policy dispute that must have occurred within many ethnic groups and urban areas in the Roman empire.[72] Schürer was incorrect to generalize that all Jews were in essence "strangers in a pagan world" (cf. n. 10), a characterization that does not fit major characters or books such as Eupolemus or Aristeas. My intent in the following is very briefly to indicate aspects of this continuity and/or discontinuity.

The Septuagint, including 2 Maccabees 4 and 10, and Acts 10 treat the relationship between God's people and foreigners. The Jerusalem temple symbolizes and creates this relationship.[73] Antiochus III recognized that it was unlawful for any foreigner to enter the temple (n. 8); consequently, when the high priest Jason hellenized the temple and Antiochus IV intruded Gentile prostitutes and pork into it, Judas Maccabeus revolted, and martyrs died opposing his "destroying lawful ways of living" (2 Macc 4–8, here 4:11). Eupolemus, ambassador to the foreign Romans, writes differently: "the nations" help the Jewish king construct the temple. Aristeas too focuses on the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem, who legitimates translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, precisely this Greek text and no other. The high priest himself declares that Torah does not primarily concern meat, drink, clothes, or "chewing the cud and parting the hoof," a Levitical text that is to be allegorized. "Aristeas" explains to king "Ptolemy" that Greeks

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[72] Cf. n. 36 and Lucian's dialogue discussed below that note. Praise or criticism of a city or an ethnic group included its attitude toward others. See Balch, "Two Apologetic Encomia: Dionysius on Rome and Josephus on the Jews," *JSJ* 13/1–2 (1982) 102–22 at 106, 111, 118–19 (II.C.1.b in the outline of handbook and actual encomia). Antiochus VII (in Diodorus 34/35.1.1) delivers such invective: "Jews . . . alone of all nations avoided dealings with any other people (ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμιξίας)" (trans. Walton and Geer in LCL). On the real similarities and yet distinctions in ethnic identity that developed between Jews and Christians, see Alan F. Segal, *Rebecca's Children: Judaism and Christianity in the Roman World* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1986) chap. 7; cf. Joseph B. Tyson, ed., *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988).

[73] Cf. S. K. Stowers, "Greeks Who Sacrifice and Those Who Do Not: Toward an Anthropology of Greek Religion," in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. M. White and O. L. Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 293–333, on cultic sacrifice that constructs and creates cultural gender and γένος ("clan").

worship Zeus, the same God honored by the Jews, and a Jerusalem elder declares to him that God blesses humans and answers prayers of the deserving.[74]

The gospel of Luke also focuses on the Jerusalem temple: as it begins, Zechariah the priest is receiving a vision there (1:5–23) and Simeon is receiving a revelation that the Lord's Messiah would be a "light for revelation to the Gentiles" (2:26, 32). As the gospel closes, Jesus is doing Bible study with the disciples in Jerusalem, not Galilee (vs. Mark), explaining that "repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations beginning from Jerusalem [again, not Galilee]" (24:47). Acts too opens in Jerusalem (1:4). The revelation to Saul on the road to Damascus, narrated three times (Acts 9, 22, 26), is not enough. He must return to Jerusalem and fall into a trance in the temple to hear the disputed revelation; in the temple Jesus says, "Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles" (22:17–21). Only the Lord of the Jerusalem temple can legitimate and generate separation from impious foreigners (2 Maccabees), the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek (Aristeas), or Paul's mission to Gentiles (Luke-Acts).

Disputes rage in and around the Jerusalem temple. Second Maccabees describes intrigues that result in death, conflicts initiated by the impious, hellenizing high priests Jason and Menelaus on the one hand, the revolt of Judas Maccabeus on the other. At the other end of the spectrum, Eupolemus narrates "the nations" building the temple, and Aristeas presents the high priest himself choosing Jerusalem elders learned in both Hebrew and Greek literature to translate the Hebrew Bible into Greek and denying that those who interpret this Bible to focus on food and drink, mice and weasels, understand. Jerusalem elders associate and eat with king Ptolemy; kosher commandments are to be allegorized.

Analogously, Acts presents disputes in Jerusalem between Hebrews and Hellenists (chaps. 6–7). Further, some Judeans teach the brothers that they must be circumcised, thus stimulating dissension and debate (15:1–2, 6, 19; 21:25). Peter refuses to eat with foreigners; but visions, a voice from heaven, and the Holy Spirit persuade him to change his practice (10:14–16, 19, 28, 34–35, 43, 44). Narratively, the apostle Peter says to Gentiles, "You yourselves know that it is unlawful for a Jew[ish

[74] Acts 17 similarly argues to Stoic, Posidonian views of God. See Balch, "The Areopagus Speech: An Appeal to the Stoic Historian Posidonius against Later Stoics and the Epicureans," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians* (cited in n. 25) 52–79 at 71, citing Diog. Laert. 7.134.

disciple of Jesus] to associate with or to visit a Gentile" (10:28a).[75] Peter's position is at the end of the spectrum with the Greek Additions to Esther and 2 Maccabees, but the apostles and elders approve an interpretation closer to, although different from, the Aristean symposium with Ptolemy. In the famous passage *De mig. Abr.* 89–93, Philo disapproves of Alexandrian Jewish allegorists who go beyond Aristeas: they neglect the literal sense of the commands and emphasize the symbolic meaning of sabbath, festivals, circumcision, and, Philo charges, they even ignore the sanctity of the temple. Josephus, in *Ant.* 20.34–48, does narrate a story in which the Jewish merchant Ananias advises king Izates that he can convert without circumcision, agreeing with the king's mother about the danger of these "customs of strangers and foreigners" (ξένων . . . καὶ ἀλλοτρίων αὐτοῖς ἐθῶν, 39).[76] Luke-Acts is not identical to Aristeas, the Alexandrian allegorists, or Ananias, but the author participates in this conflict interpreting temple, scripture, and Mosaic customs. And since the temple constructs and organizes relationships with outsiders (Stowers), Luke's books also join this Maccabean debate.

Stephen is accused in Jerusalem of saying that "Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs (ἀλλάξει τὰ ἔθη) that Moses handed on to us" (Acts 6:14; cf. vs. 11), and Paul hears from James in Jerusalem that other Jews have heard "that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs" (21:21). Paul is also charged with having "brought Greeks into the temple and . . . [with having] defiled this holy Place" (21:28; cf., e.g., 2 Macc 3:4–40). Second Maccabees powerfully resists just such "change,"[77] just as Philo resists other Jewish allegorists who neglect the literal commandments. These disputes result in martyrs' deaths both in 2 Maccabees 6–7 and in

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[75] Of countless studies, see F. Bovon, "Tradition et rédaction en Actes 10:1–11:10," *ThZ* 26 (1970) 22–45. Mark A. Plunkett, "Ethnocentricity and Salvation History in the Cornelius Episode (Acts 10:1–11:18)," in *SBL 1985 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1985) 465–79. Joseph B. Tyson, "The Gentile Mission and the Authority of Scripture in Acts," *NTS* 33/4 (1987) 619–31.

[76] See Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles according to Josephus," *HTR* 80/4 (1987) 409–30 at 420 n. 34; 424–25. Cf. K. G. Kuhn, "Προσήλυτος," *TDNT* (1968) 6.727–44. Note, however, that Kuhn was a member of Grundmann's institute to eradicate Jewish influences on Christianity (n. 7); see Heschel, "Theologen für Hitler," 140, and Vos, "Antijudäismus," 91, 93–94.

[77] See the paragraphs above at nn. 29–33.

Acts 7 (and near death in 21:31). This conflict is entertaining, as Pervo[78] has pointed out to our sometimes Puritan guild of scholars; we also choose violent movies and novels in the twentieth century. But ethnic conflict in Luke-Acts is both literary and politically actual, as the Maccabean revolt, the pogroms in Alexandria, and early Christian martyrdoms related to "changing" the customs show. Luke-Acts addresses a conflict concerning the ethnic customs in Moses' constitution and laws. This conflict involves a debate both with insiders also concerned about interpreting temple and Torah and with urban outsiders concerning whether these customs are misanthropic or philanthropic.[79]

This essay began with a reference to John Hyrcanus's bilingual coins. Second Maccabees values the Jews' preservation of their own language (n. 30). Esther has a sort of Pentecost which announces in all languages that Jews are to be destroyed. Then under Esther's influence the king reverses his declaration and declares that they are to be helped. Aristeas legitimates the use of Greek, even for the holy books. Luke-Acts, like Esther, has a Pentecost in all languages (Acts 2:4–5), now announcing salvation for all nations, but it too values Hebrew (e.g., Acts 22:1).

Finally, Acts' view of sin and forgiveness (10:34–35, 43) approaches that of Aristeas (192; cf. 190, 205, 210) in being universal, a contrast with 2 Macc 6:12–17. However, Segal[80] points out that in early Judaism, election is typically distinct from salvation, and in this way, Aristeas is closer to 2 Maccabees; both are observant (e.g., Ep. Arist. 182–83), as Lukan Gentile Christians are not (Acts 15:19).

In summary, I have sketched attitudes toward foreigners in several books written in or related to Maccabean Jerusalem: 2 Maccabees, Eupolemus, Esther, and the Letter of Aristeas. All these except Esther involve the high priest(s) as a main character who relates to foreigners in Judea and Rome or Alexandria. These books, their high priests, and ritual in the temple do not promote one normative relationship, but rather a spectrum of possible relationships with foreigners, tensions that would have been familiar in most contemporary Mediterranean urban areas, as we see from Lucian's satire. In both Esther and 2 Maccabees, the books more alienated from Greek culture, there are nevertheless

[78] Richard I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987).

[79] I argue this in more detail in "Paul in Acts" (n. 6)

[80] Segal, *Rebecca's Children,* 169. 172.

conversions to Judaism, whereas in Eupolemus and Aristeas, foreigners admire Jewish persons and practices. In none of these four books do Jews "mingle" with foreigners in a manner that results in destroying ancient practices, although Philo later opposes some allegorists who move beyond Aristeas's observant acculturation. In Eupolemus, Aristeas, and Acts, Jews and foreigners are understood to worship the same God. Luke-Acts promotes an option in dialogue with that spectrum of possible political/ethnic/theological choices.

EN-SPIRITED WATERS: BAPTISM IN THE *CONFESSIONS* OF AUGUSTINE

Pamela Bright

The ceremonies of baptism in the cathedral of Milan at Eastertide of the year 387 were marked by special joy. The year before, hymns and psalms had raised the spirits of the congregation during the long vigils in the cathedral, where "the devout people [had] watched day and night in the church, ready to die with their bishop, thy servant" (*Confessions* 9.7, LCL 1.31)[1] during the confrontation with the empress Justina. These hymns, quickly incorporated into the Milanese liturgy, enriched the beauty of the Easter celebrations for those assembled for baptism.

Among the catechumens gathered around Bishop Ambrose, his deacons, and presbyters was a little group from the province of Africa: a former rhetor of the imperial court, Augustine; his natural son, Adeodatus; and Alypius, a member of his circle of friends. It was the moment for which Augustine's widowed mother had prayed for more than two decades—to see her gifted son at last a "catholic christian." Augustine recalls the joy of that moment:

> How abundantly did I weep to hear those hymns and canticles of thine, being touched to the very quick by the voices of thy sweet church song! Those voices flowed into my ears, and thy truth pleasingly distilled into my heart, which caused the affections of my devotion to overflow, and my tears to run over, and happy did I find myself therein. (*Conf.* 9.6, LCL 2.29)

Augustine recorded the circumstances of his baptism in book 9 of the *Confessions* about ten years after that Easter morning in northern Italy. In a burst of creativity, the newly consecrated African bishop launched a new literary genre that became a vehicle for communicating personal reflections upon the circumstances of one's life. It was neither a personal meditation nor an apologia, but a "confession of praise" before "many witnesses" (*Conf.* 10.1, LCL 2.75). It is in the midst of the faith community that Augustine acknowledged the goodness of God at work

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[1] St. Augustine, *Confessions*, LCL, trans. William Watts (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989). Henceforth *Conf.*, LCL 1 or 2.

from beginning to the seventh day, whether in the microcosm of the individual life or in the macrocosm of creation itself.

Through the previous eight books of the *Confessions*, Augustine had shared with his readers the labyrinthine journey of his prodigal return to God, now publicly solemnized in the waters of baptism. However, it is precisely at this point that one becomes aware of a puzzling feature of the narrative. The actual account of the baptism itself is constricted to a comparatively brief comment (*Conf.* 9.6, LCL 2.29) between the dramatic retelling of the immediate circumstances of the conversion (*Conf.* 8.6–9:3) and the exquisitely detailed narration of his mother's illness and death (*Conf.* 9.8–13)—in spite of his protest that he is in haste *multa praetereo, quia multum festino* (*Conf.* 9.8, LCL 2.35).

Book 9 concludes the narrative section of the *Confessions*. For the reader the abruptness of the change of style and mood between books 1–9 and books 10–13 is rather like entering a tranquil lake after plunging through the white waters of a river gorge. We are swept from the turbulence of anxieties, despair, tremulous joys, and profound personal grief to a magisterial reflection on universal themes of time and eternity in the frame of an inspired contemplation of the opening chapter of Genesis. However, it is not the apparent disjunction between book 9 and book 10 that is the focus of this paper. Rather I will argue that while the baptism itself was treated briefly (even reticently), in actuality the whole of the last section of the *Confessions* glimmers like shot-silk with references to the en-Spirited waters of "this great sacrament."

A. *En-Spirited Waters: The African Tradition*

1. *Tertullian and the Waters of Baptism*

One of the recurring motifs in the literature of the African church for a century and a half before Augustine wrote the *Confessions* is that of the en-Spirited waters of baptism. Tertullian's treatise *On Baptism* is one of the foundational texts for the ecclesiology of the African church, for Cyprian and his contemporaries in the mid-third century, as well as for Catholics and Donatists alike in the fourth and fifth centuries. Tertullian begins the treatise with the reminder that "we, little fishes, after the example of our ΙΧΘΥΣ Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor have we safety in any other way than by permanently abiding in water" (*On*

Baptism 1; ANF 3.669).[2] He continues with an encomium on water itself:

> For water is one of those things which, before all the furnishing of the world, were quiescent with God in a yet unshapen state. "In the beginning," says scripture, "God made the heaven and the earth. But the earth was invisible, and unorganized [*incomposita*[3]] and darkness was over the abyss; and the Spirit of the Lord was hovering [*ferebatur*[4]] over the waters." The first thing . . . to venerate is the age of the waters in that their substance is ancient; the second, their dignity, in that they were the seat of the Divine Spirit, more pleasing to Him, no doubt, than all the other existing elements (*On Baptism* 3, ANF 3.670).

Tertullian goes on to praise water: "alone—always a perfect, gladsome, simple material substance, pure in itself—supplied a worthy vehicle to God." Water is the first element to receive the precept "to bring forth living creatures [*animas*]." "Water was the first to produce that which had life, that there be no wonder in baptism if waters know how to give life [*animare*[5]] (*On Baptism* 3, ANF 3.670). However, the aptness of water to be a life-giver is derived from the Holy Spirit's hovering over it: "a holy thing, of course, hovered over a holy," rather, "from that which hovered over that which was hovered over borrowed a holiness" (*On Baptism* 4, ANF 3.670).

While the pools to which pagans ascribe healing powers are but "widowed waters" *(On Baptism* 5 ANF 3.671), that is, "widowed" of their true spouse, the Spirit, the en-Spirited waters of baptism are indeed healing waters. Citing the angelic stirring of the healing waters of the pool of Bethsaida (John 5:4), Tertullian goes on to speak of the cleansing, healing waters of baptism:

> Thus [humankind] will be restored for God to his likeness, who in days gone by had been conformed to the image of God; (the image is counted to be in his form: the likeness in his eternity:) for he receives again that Spirit of God which he had first received from his *afflatus*, but had afterwards lost through sin. [*imago in effigie, similitudo in aeternitate censetur. recipit*

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[2] Tertullian, *On Baptism*, trans. S. Thelwall, *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 3 (henceforth ANF (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994).

[3] *CPT* (ed. J. M. Lupton; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908) 3.6.4.

[4] *CPT*, 3.6.5.

[5] *CPT*, 3.7.7.

enim illud dei spiritum, quem tunc de adflatu eius acceperat, sed post amiserat per delictum.[6]] (*On Baptism* 5 ANF 3.672)

2. *The Donatist Debate: Optatus and Parmenian*

Over a hundred years later we hear the themes of en-Spirited and "widowed" waters debated in the African church in the Donatist/ Catholic debates of the second half of the fourth century, this time between Christian and Christian! In which rite of baptism is the Spirit present? Parmenian, the successor of Donatus, lays down the challenge in claiming for his Donatist communion the sixfold "endowments"[7] of the true church. Only among the Donatists are found the *cathedra* (the lawful succession to the bishop's see), the *angelus* (a bishop sent by God; only the true bishop can "stir the waters," like the angel at the pool of Bethsaida), the *Spiritus* (the Holy Spirit, present only at valid baptisms), the *fons signatus* (*Canticle* 4:1, the baptismal font, again no valid baptism without the true bishop), the *signatus sigillo* (the Symbol of faith can be recited only in the true (Donatist) church, and the *umbilicus* (*Canticle* 7:2, for Parmenian this symbolized the Eucharistic altar).

Optatus, Catholic bishop of Milevis in Numidia, answered Parmenian point by point in a seven-volume work *On the Schism of the Donatists, against Parmenian.* The literary debate between the two bishops did not focus so much on the "endowments" themselves, but rather on which church could claim them for its own! Optatus charges the Donatists with "a sin against baptism which contrary to his (God's) command you had moved a second time, drawing to yourselves, as it were, the waters of the ancient pool."[8] He is referring to the pool of Bethsaida (John 5:4) and is arguing against the Donatist practice of rebaptizing converted Catholics (the angel was allowed to stir the healing waters only once). The *piscina*, the baptismal font, takes its name from "that Fish, ΙΧΘΥΣ . . . this *piscina* which in the whole Catholic church throughout the world is joyfully filled with saving waters for the life of the human race."[9]

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[6] *CPT*, 3.16.1–3.

[7] *The Work of Optatus, Bishop of Milevis. Against the Donatists* (trans. O. R. Vassal-Phillips; London: Longmans, Green, 1917) 64, 65.

[8] *The Work of Optatus*, 123.

[9] *The Work of Optatus*, 124.

Optatus's work, completed in the early seventies of the fourth century, was much admired by Augustine on his return to Africa in 388. In the next ten years Augustine had ample reason to acquaint himself with the underlying issues of the Catholic/Donatist schism which had already torn the African church socially, politically, and spiritually for nearly eighty years when he began to write the *Confessions* as leader of the small embattled Catholic minority. At the forefront of the theological debate was the question of the presence of the Spirit in the waters of baptism. For Augustine the battle was to be joined with Donatist bishops and educated laymen for at least the first twenty years of his own episcopacy,[10] but the *Confessions* lies outside of those conflictual debates. Rather, what the *Confessions* gains from the bitter debate is a sharpened theological awareness of the regeneration in the Spirit in the life-giving waters of baptism. It is this awareness that Augustine elaborates in the frame of an extended meditation on the six days of creation in books 12 and 13, with which he draws the *Confessions* to a close.

B. *Baptism in the Confessions*

1. *"Imaged" and "Molded" in the Waters of Baptism*

There are brief, but significant references to baptism in the early books of the *Confessions*. In a serious boyhood illness, Augustine himself called for baptism "to be initiated and washed with thy wholesome sacraments" (*Conf.* 1:11, LCL 1.35), but on his recovery his baptism was deferred:

> But how many, and what violent waves of temptation did seem to threaten me after my childhood! Those my mother full well knew; and desired to commit to them the clay of which I was afterwards to be new molded, rather than the image itself. (*Conf.* 1:11, LCL 1.37)

The young African, though having received the initial anointing of the catechumate soon after birth (*Conf.* 1:11, LCL 1.35), was to wait perhaps another twenty-five years before he was "imaged" (Gen 1:26, 27) and "molded" (Gen 2:7) as a new creation in the waters of baptism. In recounting his departure from Carthage to Rome in 384, leaving his

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[10] *Writings in Connection with the Donatist Controversy* (trans. J. R. King; Edinburgh" T. & T. Clark, 1872): *On Baptism, against the Donatists*, 7 Books; *Answer to the Letter of Petilian*; *On the Correction of the Donatists*.

mother in tears at the chapel shrine of Cyprian, on a cliff above the harbour, Augustine draws upon baptismal imagery:

> But I deceived her, though holding me by force, that either I should go back with her, or she might go along with me: for I feigned that I had a friend whom I could not leave, till I saw him with a fair wind under sail. Thus I made a lie to my mother, and to so good a mother too, and so got away from her: for this also thou hast mercifully forgiven me, preserving me from the waters of the sea, then full of execrable filthiness, landing me safe at the water of thy Grace. (*Conf.* 5:8, LCL 1.237)

For Augustine, not all water was "the perfect, gladsome element" described by Tertullian (*On Baptism* 3, ANF 3.670). While fountains welling up in the dry land are apt images for baptism, Augustine associates the waters of the sea with turbulence and danger. Adolescent temptations are imaged as "violent waves," and his young adulthood is compared to "polluted seas" and is to be contrasted with "the tranquil water of thy Grace." These images will recur throughout the long meditation of Genesis through books 12 and 13 of the *Confessions*.

It is in the context of this meditation on the six days of creation, followed by the rest of the seventh day (Gen 1:1–2:3) that Augustine refers constantly to the sacrament of baptism. In the last two books more than anywhere else in the *Confessions*, we find the fullest treatment of baptism. From "the first day" (Gen 1:1–5), as a child of light steaming from the en-Spirited waters of baptism, to "the sixth day," imaging the Trinity, Augustine confesses his joy and thanksgiving for the goodness of God in the re-creation in baptism. The meditation on Genesis that concludes the *Confessions* is far from an exegetical exercise tacked on to the narrative of the *Confessions*, but is set in the context of the pilgrimage of the soul "thirsting after thee . . . seeking thee . . . that she may dwell in thy house all the days of her life, and what is her life but thou?" (*Conf.* 12:11, LCL 2.307)

The prayer that begins book 13 underlines the theme of the whole of the *Confessions*:

> I call upon thee, O my God, my Mercy; upon thee that created me and who has not forgotten me, that had forgotten thee. (*Conf.* 13:1, LCL 2.375)

The goodness manifest in creation is the same goodness manifest throughout history and throughout our personal histories!

2. *Baptism and the Six Days of Creation*

2.1. Day One: Genesis 1:1–5 (*Conf.* 12:1–13:14)

"In the beginning God made heaven and earth" *in principio fecit deus caelum et terram* (*Conf.* 12:20, LCL 2.333). This single verse of Genesis occupies Augustine for the whole of book 12. He immediately focuses upon the creation of "heaven," not the heaven above us, observable to the eye, but that invisible realm—"the heaven of heavens" (Ps 115:16) [*caelum caeli domino*] (*Conf.* 12:2, LCL 2.291) "which is the Lord's . . . own house . . . that settled estate of peace of those holy spirits, those citizens of thy city in heavenly places, which are above those heavenly places that we see."

After this long consideration on the creation of the heavens, Augustine asks:

> But what was the cause, O thou true-seeking Light; . . . tell me why after the mention of heaven and of the invisible and shapeless earth and the darkness upon the deep, thy scriptures should then at length make the first mention of thy Spirit? (*Conf.* 13:6, LCL 2.385)

Almost a third of the final book of the *Confessions* is devoted to a reflection on Gen 1:2–5 (*Conf.* 13:3–14), which is focused implicitly and explicitly on baptism. Section after section refers to en-Spirited waters:

13:4 thy good Spirit indeed moved over the waters;
13:5 thy Spirit moved over the face of the waters;
13:6 a close analysis of *superfero*, the moving over;
13:7 where thy Spirit was moved over the waters;
13:8 thy Spirit, which moves unchangeably;
13:9 why only the Spirit moved over the waters;
13:10 by thy gift which moveth over every mutable thing.

Finally, Augustine concludes his reflection on the first day of creation with an encomium on baptism:

> Proceed in thy confession, O my faith, say to the Lord, O holy, holy, holy Lord my God, in thy name have we been baptised, O Father, Son, and Spirit; in thy name do we baptise, Father, Son, and Spirit; because among us also in his Christ did God make an heaven and earth, namely the spiritual and carnal people of his church. Yes, and our earth before it received the form of doctrine, was invisible and unformed, and we were covered over with the darkness of ignorance, for thou has chastised man for his iniquity, and thy judgements are a great deep. But because thy Spirit moved over the waters, thy mercy forsook not our misery and you said: Let there be light: repent ye,

> for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Repent, let there be light. (*Conf.* 13:12, LCL 2.397)

2.2. Day Two: Genesis 1:6–8 (*Conf.* 13:15)

With the Genesis account of the stretching of the firmament between the waters above and the waters below, "other waters there be above the firmament" (*Conf.* 13:15, LCL 2.405), Augustine turns back to earlier themes of book 12, where he had devoted so much attention to the questions of the multivalency of Scripture:

> Wonderful is the depth of thy words, whose surface, see, is before us, gently leading on the little ones: and yet a wonderful deepness. (*Conf.* 12:14, LCL 2.313)

Later he adds:

> O my God, thou Light of my inner eyes, since there may be several meanings gathered out of the same words and yet all true . . ." (*Conf.* 13:18, LCL 2.329)

That the scriptures now, under the firmament, appear to us "in the riddle of the clouds and through the mirror of the heavens (*Conf.* 13:15, LCL 2.407) in a refraction of truth proper to our pilgrim state is a theme that will be repeated throughout the rest of the meditation on Genesis. We are under the scriptures as we are under the firmament:

> For we know no other books which so destroy pride, which so destroy the adversary, and the defender that resists thy reconciliation by defending his own sins. I know, not, Lord, I know not of any other such chaste words that are so powerful in persuading me to confession, and in bowing my stiff neck unto thy yoke, and inviting me to serve thee for naught. (*Conf.* 13:15, LCL 2.405)

2.3. Day Three: Genesis 1:9–13 (*Conf.* 13:16, 17)

The "gathering of the waters, called sea . . . so setting the bounds on wicked desires" (*Conf.* 13:17, LCL 2.411) recalls Augustine's narration of his childhood sickness where the deferment of his baptism exposed him to the "violent waves of temptation" (*Conf.* 1:11, LCL 1.37), whereas the dry land is furnished with a "secret and sweet spring" which enables the earth to bring forth fruit. The fruits of baptism will be elaborated throughout the meditation on days four, five and six:

> Nor is the bitterness of men's wills, but the gathering of the waters, called sea: for thou restrainest also the wicked desires of men's souls, and settest them their bounds, how far the waters may be suffered to pass . . . but as for

> the souls that thirst after thee and that appear before thee (being by other bounds divided from the society of the sea) them doest thou water by a secret and sweet spring, that the earth may bring forth fruit. (*Conf.* 13:17, LCL 2.411)

2.4. Day Four: Genesis 1:14–19 (*Conf.* 13:18, 19)
The lights of the firmament, various and beautiful, are likened to the gifts of the Spirit, which build up the church (1 Cor 12:7–11). These gifts are adjusted to the spiritual needs of all in the church, from the infant in grace to the wisest and most spiritual.

2.5. Days Five and Six: Genesis 1:20–31 (*Conf.* 13:20–34)
The fifth and sixth days of creation, with the account of the teeming life in the seas and on the earth, culminate in God's making of humankind "after our own image and likeness" *ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram* (*Conf.* 13:22, LCL 2.433). We find constant references to baptism throughout these sections of the *Confessions*. With seas and skies filled with fish and fowl of the fifth day of creation, Augustine turns once more to the motif of the "waters of temptation" from which we are plucked at baptism:

> For thy sacraments, O God, by the ministry of thy holy ones, have moved in the midst of the waves of temptation of this present world, for the imbuing of the Gentiles in thy name, in thy baptism. (*Conf.* 13:20, LCL 2.421)

But the pilgrimage of the soul does not end at baptism just as the narrative of Augustine's conversion and baptism is not a fitting end to the *Confessions*. Baptism is a beginning:

> For in this sense do I now understand those creeping and flying creatures, to which corporeal sacraments the initiated being subjected would make no further progress, unless their soul were spiritually quickened on yet another stage, and unless after the word of beginning, it looked to the completion (cf. Heb 6:1). (*Conf.* 13:20, LCL 2.424–25)

The pilgrimage begun at baptism is a lifelong struggle against all that would "conform" it to this transient world (*Conf.* 13:21, LCL 2.429). It is in the context of baptism as a beginning, but not the completion, that Augustine turns to Gen 1:26–27, "Let us make man after our own image and similitude" (*Conf.* 13:22, LCL 2.431). Referring to Paul's words (1 Cor 4:15), Augustine comments:

> For to this purpose said that dispenser of thine, who begets children by the gospel, that he might not ever have them babes, whom he must be fain to

> feed with milk, and bring them up like a nurse: Be transformed, says he, by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good, that acceptable and perfect will of God. (*Conf.* 13:22, LCL 2.433)

In the following section, Augustine sets out to explore the meaning of God's injunction to humanity "to have dominion" *habet potestatem.* What power of judgment or discernment is given to the renewed child of light? What follows immediately is a detailed list of what is *not* within this power of discernment: *not* the power to discern the spiritual knowledge which shines in the firmament; *not* the power to judge "thy book itself" (for we are not appointed judges of the Law, but "doers" of the Law); *not* to discern the distinction between spiritual and carnal men (to be known only to God); and finally, *not* to judge over the present world. The true spiritual discernment is received in baptism, and at the eucharist, and as a ministry of the Word for interpreting the Scriptures that leads to the praise of God:

> Be it either in the solemnity of that sacrament by which such are admitted into the church, as thy mercy searches out in many waters; or in that other in which the Fish is received, which taken out of the deep, the devout earth now feeds upon; or else in the expression and sounds of words, subject to the authority of thy book . . . namely, by interpreting, expounding, discoursing, disputing, praising, and praying unto thee with the mouth, expressions breaking forth with a loud sounding, that the people may answer, Amen. (*Conf.* 13:23, LCL 2.437)

Augustine places Paul before us as a model of renewed humanity:

> Of what art thou so glad, O great Paul, of what art thou so glad? What is it thou feedest upon, O thou man renewed unto the knowledge of God, after the image of him that created thee, thou living soul of so much continency, thou tongue of the flying fowls speaking mysteries? (*Conf.* 13:26, LCL 2.451)

C. *Conclusion*

It is impossible in a narrow compass to plumb the complexity of Augustine's "confession" of his joy and thanksgiving for the goodness of God in the frame of a meditation on Genesis. Rather, the aim of the present study has been to explore the baptismal references in the books of the *Confessions* that follow the brief account of his baptism in the cathedral of Milan. It has been the argument of this paper that the reader is to look

to the profound reflection on Genesis in the closing books of the *Confessions* in order to glimpse something of the richness of Augustine's understanding of baptism. Even then, to concentrate on the last two books is inadequate. The *Confessions* is a single piece. One needs to follow the thought of Augustine from the baptism itself in book 9, on through the healing of the past in book 10, the astonishing *tour de force* on time and eternity in book 11, the contemplation of the "heaven of heavens" in book 12, and finally the joy of a "child of light" renewed in the image of the Trinity.

It is in the very profundity of Augustine's appreciation of the grace of baptism for the whole of the Christian life that one better understands the brevity of the account of his own baptism. He insists that the renewal of life in baptism is a beginning. It is the morning of our new life. But it is not the end. The "word of beginning" looks "to the completion" (*Conf.* 13:20, LCL 2.425). The six days of creation are followed by the seventh day. We are reborn to greet the Sabbath, peace without evening:

> But the seventh day is without any evening, nor hath it any setting. . . . [W]e also after our works (which are therefore very good because thou hast given them to us) may rest in thee in the Sabbath of life everlasting. (*Conf.* 13:36, LCL 2.471, 72)

CYPRIAN'S ESCHATOLOGY: EXPLAINING DIVINE PURPOSE

J. Patout Burns

Richard Landes has argued that, since most Christian theology and history is written by persons who had a stake in the preservation of the institutional church, the role of apocalyptic eschatology in Christian popular piety is underrepresented in the preserved record.[1] A significant exception to this rule might be the letters and treatises of Cyprian, bishop of Carthage during the decade prior to his martyrdom on 14 September 258. His episcopal ministry involved a series of challenges for the church: the first systematic imperial action against Christians, division within the community over the readmission of those who failed in the persecution, conflict among the bishops over the status of schismatics, and a renewal of persecution. At each stage of the crisis, Cyprian attempted to interpret the divine intention, to locate the community in the history of salvation, and to gauge its distance from the return of Jesus as judge and vindicator. Because of Cyprian's status as episcopal proto-martyr and patron of the African church, his letters and treatises were carefully preserved—including his occasional excursions into imminent eschatology. By defining and explaining the shifts in Cyprian's theodicy, this essay will attempt to demonstrate the situations in which apocalyptic flourished or failed to take hold among his people.

A. *The Challenge to Faith*

In January 250, the Decian edict required all inhabitants of the Empire to participate in the imperial cult and instituted a mechanism of systematic enforcement which threatened the upper classes with loss of property and the lower classes with violent coercion. The emperor's action must have come as a shock to the mid-third-century Christians who had worked out an accommodation with the official religion and had come to expect that their illegal associations would be tolerated by

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[1] Richard Landes, "Millenarismus absconditus," *Le Moyen Age* 98 (1992) 356–77.

the governing authorities.[2] When faced with a hard choice between their baptismal commitment and their social or economic security, many Christians either abandoned their faith or employed one of the legal subterfuges which allowed them to acknowledge, if not to serve, two masters.[3]

What might have been only another crisis of personal commitment and individual fortitude quickly developed into a challenge to the cohesiveness and organizational structure of the Christian community. Some Christians stood firm under torture and inspired their fellows, if not to emulate their example, then at least to repent of their failure and seek God's forgiveness through the established procedures of sustained public penance. Others of the lapsed, however, refused to submit to the authority of the clergy; they attempted to avoid the church's discipline by using the martyrs' privilege of interceding directly before God. Upon the martyrdom of the confessor who had issued them a letter of peace, they demanded that the clergy concede immediate reinstatement to full participation in the communion.[4] A group of presbyters in Carthage rebelled against the directives of their exiled bishop by accepting these lapsed into the church without requiring any ritual of repentance, even as the persecution itself continued. Eventually, Cyprian and his fellow bishops established a policy of requiring public repentance and granting reconciliation which both enforced the church's religious exclusivity and asserted the efficacy of its rituals.[5]

Cyprian's letters from exile and the exhortation he addressed to the church community upon his return indicate a second problem which troubled the Christians of Carthage. The sustained and systematic nature

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[2] Tertullian referred to subterfuges which had been developed for avoiding the oaths essential to business contracts, such as subscribing or accepting a text which contained the reference to idols without actually pronouncing the oath; see *De idol.* 21 (CCSL 2:1121–22). The large number of Christians who acquired certificates of compliance with the Decian edict without sacrificing—and then claimed that they had not acted contrary to their baptismal commitment— also indicates a working relationship with the Roman cults. The introductions to the four volumes of Graeme Clarke's *The Letters of St. Cyprian*, Ancient Christian Writers, vols. 43, 44, 46, 47 (New York, 1984–89) provide an excellent overview of the sequence of events.

[3] These Christians were apparently surprised to learn that they had violated their baptismal commitment. See, for example, the letter of the Roman clergy about this problem, *Ep.* 30.3.1 (CCSL 3B:141–42).

[4] Cyprian obtained a copy of such a request for a letter of peace, *Ep.* 21 (CCSL 3B:111–15). He indicated that many made their demands in person, *Ep.* 20.2.2 (CCSL 3B:107–8).

[5] *Ep.* 55 (CCSL 3B:256–95) explains and defends these decisions.

of the persecution challenged their faith in God's providential care for the church and control over the forces of evil. Prior persecutions had been episodic and even random; without threatening the community as a whole, they evinced divine selection of those worthy of the crown of martyrdom and of those requiring correction or expulsion. The Decian edict, limited only by the inefficiency of the imperial bureaucracy, challenged the baptismal commitment of every Christian in the Empire. Moreover, even after active prosecution had ceased, the crisis was sustained by devastating disease and the threat of renewed persecution. Cyprian's responses to the questions and doubts of his people took different forms over the troubled decade of his episcopacy. Throughout, however, he attempted to provide a coherent explanation of God's salvific purpose in allowing the Christians to suffer persecution and other dangers.

B. *The Decian Persecution*

Cyprian's letters from exile during the Decian persecution attacked the foundational supposition that God either had failed to heed the church's prayer to be shielded from temptation or had proven unable to deliver the faithful from evil. He insisted that the persecution was actually God's own action. The imperial decree brought a divinely inspired punishment for the sins of Christians and the divisions within the church; it was a call to reform and a purging of the unworthy from the communion. If the community repented of its failing, if it prayed in union of spirit, he promised, God would quickly restore peace and security. But if Christians refused to heed the divine warning, if they readmitted the lapsed even as the divine lash continued to strike, then God would intensify and extend the persecution.[6]

His response indicates that, despite the systematic nature of the Decian persecution, Cyprian considered it only a more virulent form of earlier, sporadic attacks on Christians. It would be temporary and would not threaten the existence of the church within the Empire. Thus he explained that once the faithful had been renewed, the fallen had

[6] He pointed out that the lack of discipline among the first set of confessors, who had been released into exile, had brought on the government's use of torture, *Ep.* 11.1.3 (CCSL 3B:57–58) and 17.1.2 (CCSL 3B:96–97). This perspective is also found in *Dom. orat.* 25–26 (CCSL 3A:106–7).

repented, and the unworthy had been purged, God would restore peace to the reformed church. He instructed the penitents to await patiently the time when the bishops could safely assemble with the entire church to make provision for their reconciliation. Only individuals who were terminally ill required an immediate granting of peace.[7]

After a year the persecuting ardor died down, and Cyprian was able to return to Carthage shortly after Easter 251. Addressing the community face-to-face, he continued interpreting imperial attack as a divine renewal and cleansing of the church.[8] He congratulated those who had preserved their faith, urged the fallen to repent, and warned of the grave consequences of refusing to submit to public penance. He charged, moreover, that the program pursued by the laxist clergy of admitting the lapsed upon the martyrs' authority but without full repentance was itself a device of the devil for continuing the attack on the church.[9] God allowed this temptation, Cyprian implied, so that the fallen would have a new opportunity to confess their faith and demonstrate their loyalty by submitting to the discipline required by the bishops.[10] Finally, he assigned the intercessory role of the martyrs to the eschatological judgment of Christ which lay in the indefinite future and thus could not challenge the present authority of the bishops.[11]

Later in the spring of 251, the African bishops met in Carthage and determined a policy for the reconciliation of those who had fallen during the persecution. They adopted a moderate and cautious policy which both asserted their authority and acknowledged its limits. Those who had obtained certificates without sacrificing would be admitted immediately; penitent sacrificers would continue to be admitted only on their death-beds. Judging the actions of the penitents, the bishops would admit them to the church's communion and thus present and commend them before the tribunal of Christ, who could discern the intentions of their hearts and would determine the adequacy of their repentance.[12]

A rigorist party, under the leadership of Novatian, opposed the bishops' decision to readmit the certified to communion and the promise

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[7] See *Ep.* 11.1.2–6.3 (CCSL 3B:56–65), 17.3.2 (CCSL 3B:98–99), 18.1.2 (CCSL 3B:100–101), and 20.3.2–3 (CCSL 3B:108–10).

[8] *De lap.* 5–7, 21 (CCSL 3:223–25, 233) and in *Ep.* 65.3.2 (CSEL 3.2:724).

[9] *De lap.* 15–16 (CCSL 3:228–29) and *Ep.* 43.3.1, 6.1–3, 7.2 (CCSL 3B:202–3, 207–10).

[10] *De lap.* 29–33 (CCSL 3:237–40).

[11] *De lap.* 17 (CCSL 3:230).

[12] *Ep.* 55.17.3 (CCSL 3B:276).

of reconciliation held out to the sacrificers. These rigorists apparently required that the fallen should continue in lifelong penance and, after death, throw themselves upon the mercy of Christ. Thus they refused to allow even dying penitents to be received into communion,[13] pointing out that some sacrificers had gained unrestricted participation in the church by recovering from the illnesses during which they had been granted peace.[14] Cyprian implied, accurately or inaccurately, that Novatian was attempting to maintain the church pure and free of the pollution carried by the idolaters.[15]

To justify his colleagues' moderate policy against these rigorist objections, Cyprian appealed to the expected coming of Christ. He charged Novatian with anticipating and usurping the eschatological role of Christ by presuming to separate wheat from tares, gold and silver from wood and clay.[16] Christ, he observed, would not only judge those sinners whom the bishops had admitted to communion but hold the leaders themselves responsible for the condemnation of others whom they had excluded from his tribunal by denying them the church's peace even in death.[17] This appeal, however, did not signal a shift in Cyprian's eschatology. Continuing the policy of delaying the reconciliation of the sacrificers until the time of death indicates that the bishops considered the return of Jesus not imminent but instead an event in the indeterminate future to which appeal could be made in support of their disputed policy.[18]

The bishops' decision to readmit those who failed by obtaining certificates and to allow the sacrificers who had recovered from their apparently mortal illness to remain in communion would, however, restrict Cyprian's freedom to explain future persecution and suffering visited upon the Christians as a purging of the unworthy from the communion. That assertion, which had been advanced as an interpretation of the Decian persecution, could not be used by a bishop who had himself defended the readmission of those who had already proven

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[13] Cyprian seems to have been arguing against such a policy in *Ep.* 55.22.1, 28.1–29.1 (CCSL 3B:280, 291–93).

[14] *Ep.* 55.13.1 (CCSL 3B:270).

[15] *Ep.* 55.27.1–3 (CCSL 3B:289–91).

[16] *Ep.* 55.25.1–2 (CCSL 3B:287–88).

[17] *Ep.* 55.15.1, 17.1–18.1, 19.2, 20.3, 28.1–29.2 (CCSL 3B:272–73, 275–80, 291–94).

[18] *Ep.* 55.29.2 (CCSL 3B:294).

themselves unfaithful. A corresponding shift in Cyprian's explanatory strategy appeared soon after.

C. *The Plague*

During the summer of 252, the plague which had been working its way through the Empire was particularly virulent in Carthage. Cyprian's treatise *On Mortality* addressed the complaints of his flock and attempted to elucidate God's purpose in allowing the Christians to suffer along with their idolatrous compatriots. This time, he referred not to the failures of Christians or even to the sins of the pagans who were also suffering and dying. Instead, he treated the disease as an opportunity for the exercise of faith. God was weaning the Christians from that occupation with the cares of the age which had taken such a heavy toll during the persecution; God was focusing their attention on the rewards of heaven;[19] God was warning those who had fallen away during the persecution not to delay repentance.[20] Thus the trust in God which the faithful demonstrated by patient suffering and mutual assistance would clearly distinguish them from idol worshipers.[21] As models for emulation, Cyprian proposed not the penitents named a year earlier in *On the Lapsed*[22] but Abraham, Job, and Tobias, just men whose faith had been tried and proven by their sufferings.[23] Although Cyprian did refer, for the first time, to the end of the world and the approach of the kingdom of God, he continued to focus on the migration of individual Christians from earth to heaven rather than on the mass exodus of that cosmic cataclysm.[24]

Cyprian next met the charges of the pagan critic Demetrianus that the Christians had angered the imperial gods and were thus responsible for the plague, military defeats, and other catastrophes which were being visited upon the Empire. He accepted his opponent's principle that

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[19] *De mort.* 2–3, 6–7, 19–20, 26 (CCSL 3A:17–20, 27–28, 31–32). This theme had a prominent part in the explanation of the failure during the Decian persecution, *De lap.* 6, 11–12 (CCSL 3:223–24, 226–27).

[20] *De mort.* 15 (CCSL 3A:24–25).

[21] *De mort.* 11, 13, 14 (CCSL 3A:22–24).

[22] *De lap.* 31 (CCSL 3:238–39).

[23] *De mort.* 10–12 (CCSL 3A:21–23).

[24] *De mort.* 2, 15 (CCSL 3A:17–18, 24–25).

natural and social disasters are punishments applied by God[25] but turned it into an offensive weapon by insisting that the true God was punishing the sins of the pagans, particularly their idolatry and their persecution of Christians.[26] As in his exhortation to patience in *On Mortality*, Cyprian again explained that, although the faithful also suffer when God punishes the pagans for their sins, the outcome is totally different. By being tried and proven, Christians were prepared for that heavenly reward in which their enemies would have no part.[27] Finally, Cyprian warned his critic that time for repentance was short. The end of the world was near; the divine judgment and the vindication of Christians would surely and shortly follow these disasters.[28]

In *On Mortality* and *To Demetrianus*, written during the relative peace following the Decian persecution, Cyprian continued the shift in interpretation of Christian suffering which he had begun in responding to the laxist schism and continued in his response to the rigorists. Unlike the persecution itself, these trials were explained not as punishment or correction of sinners but a testing and proving which would lead the just to deliverance and reward. The laxist schism had presented an opportunity to reverse failure during the persecution and regain the communion of the church; these new disasters provided means to secure a heavenly reward. Accompanying this development in Cyprian's thought was a shift toward a more imminent eschatology. Natural, political, and military disasters indicated the approaching end of the world and the coming of Christ. For pagans, these sufferings were calls to repentance; for Christians, the precursors of vindication and heavenly reward. That reward, moreover, was not to be delayed.

D. *The Renewal of Persecution*

In the spring of 253, the African bishops became convinced—on the basis of dream visions and more mundane warnings—that the systematic persecution of Christians was about to be renewed.[29] Cyprian wrote a series of letters dealing with this anticipated crisis: first, with his African colleagues to Cornelius, bishop of Rome, outlining a policy for

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[25] *Ad Demet.* 5–6 (CCSL 3A:37–38).
[26] *Ad Demet.* 7–9, 12 (CCSL 3A:38–40, 42).
[27] *Ad Demet.* 18–20, 22 (CCSL 3A:45–48).
[28] *Ad Demet.* 17, 22–23 (CCSL 3A:44–45, 47–49).
[29] *Ep.* 57.1.2–2.1 (CCSL 3B:301–3).

immediately reconciling the penitent sacrificers; next, to the church in Thibaris exhorting its members to prepare for the battle; thirdly, to Cornelius again praising him for his arrest and the public profession of faith by his flock; and, finally some months later, to Cornelius's successor, Lucius, congratulating him on his own election as bishop and his confession of faith.[30]

As he had during the schism and plague, Cyprian interpreted the coming persecution as a testing and proving of Christians rather than a punishment for their sins.[31] Those who had been faithful in the earlier persecution would have to guard what they had achieved; those who had failed would soon have the opportunity to regain the heavenly promise they had lost.[32] He predicted, moreover, that the next battle would be even more violent and intense.[33] Christians would not be able to preserve their possessions and lives within imperial society, as had some during the Decian persecution, by acquiring certificates or passing anonymously through the loose net of the imperial bureaucracy: their fate would be execution or a wandering exile.[34] The church would not be able to assemble in secret as it had before; the bishops would not be able to preach and encourage. Each would have to rely upon Christ alone as a companion in danger.[35] Like the three young men in the fiery furnace, the faithful must be prepared to face death in the sure conviction that they would be protected from the power of evil, even if they were not delivered from death. Like the plague, the coming persecution would be the test of their faith: they must face despoliation and death fearlessly, trusting that they had not been abandoned by an impotent God but were being drawn to heavenly glory.[36]

The imminent eschatology which appeared in *To Demetrianus* had a year later become integral to Cyprian's appeal. Christians must recognize that the world itself was old and dying; even were they to survive the persecution, they could not hope for a long, comfortable life in the

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[30] *Ep.* 57, 58, 60, 61 (CCSL 3B:300–10; CSEL 3.2:656–66, 691–98). The first three were written in May and June 253; the fourth perhaps in the autumn of that year, after the immediate crisis had passed. See Clarke, 46:212–16, 226–27, 265–67, 272–73, for the dating of the letters.

[31] *Ep.* 58.2.2–3 (CSEL 3.2:657–58).

[32] *Ep.* 58.3.3, 8.2 (CSEL 3.2:659, 663–64).

[33] *Ep.* 57.5.2 (CCSL 3B:309–10); 58.1.2 (CSEL 3.2:657–58).

[34] *Ep.* 57.4.3–4 (CCSL 3B:306–8); 58.4.1–2 (CSEL 3.2:659–60).

[35] *Ep.* 58.4.1–2 (CSEL 3.2:659–60).

[36] *Ep.* 58.5.2; 61.3 (CSEL 3.2:660, 699); *De mort.* 6 (CCSL 3A:19–20).

Empire.[37] Since they would soon die anyway, better let them do so as martyrs.[38] Far more important than the weariness of the world and the certainty of death, however, was the claim that the events of the last days were approaching. The Antichrist was close at hand, indeed upon them.[39] Christ, however, was close behind.[40]

Perhaps the best indicator of this change in Cyprian's eschatology lies in his shift of focus from single combat to corporate warfare against the forces of evil. Even as he predicted that the church would be dispersed and Christians isolated, he no longer described the upcoming trial as the series of individual struggles which had characterized his interpretation of the plague. With his fellow bishops, he read the signs and warnings of persecution as a divine command to gather the whole flock together, to muster the penitents into the encampment of the church, whence they could all march forth to battle at once.[41] In encouraging the Christians of Thibaris, he anticipated the judgment day, when Christ would gather the whole church and lead its victorious assembly through the gates of Paradise into the presence of God.[42] A month later, he sang the praises of the united front which the Roman Christians had presented to the enemy: at the first word of danger, all rushed together and, in a fearless demonstration of solidarity, escorted their bishop Cornelius as he was led off to trial and exile.[43]

This belief that the anticipated persecution would initiate the eschatological struggle and presage the immediate return of Jesus served a number of different functions in Cyprian's attempt to prepare his people for the crisis. For Christians facing trial, it meant that the judgment would follow without delay: those who stood firm would soon be vindicated and rewarded; those who failed would immediately face judgment and condemnation, without time for repentance.[44] For bishops caught between the criticism of the rigorists and the demands of the penitents, the expected return of Jesus once again provided a rationale

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[37] *Ep.* 58.1.2–2.1, 3.3 (CSEL 3.2:656–57, 659).

[38] *Ep.* 58.3.3 (CSEL 3.2:659). In *De mort.*, he had responded to complaints of Christians who were dying of plague but claimed that they would have been willing to die as martyrs; *De mort.* 17 (CCSL 3A:25–26).

[39] *Ep.* 57.5.1 (CCSL 3B:308–9); 58.1.2; 60.3.2; 61.2.3 (CSEL 3.2:656–57, 694, 696).

[40] *Ep.* 58.71 (CSEL 3.2:662).

[41] *Ep.* 57.2.1 (CCSL 3B:302–3).

[42] *Ep.* 58.10.1 (CSEL 3.2:665).

[43] *Ep.* 60.2.4 (CSEL 3.2:693).

[44] *Ep.* 58.3.3, 7.1 (CSEL 3.2:659, 662).

for calculated leniency. They could allow the more dangerous penitents, those who had voluntarily sacrificed to the Roman gods, to return to communion because their vow of fidelity would soon be tested and judged by Christ himself, who could discern the intentions of the heart which lay hidden from the bishops.[45] They argued, moreover, that the bishops themselves would soon have to render an account of their service: anyone whose harsh rigorism had forced martyrs and exiles to die outside the church would have to answer to Christ himself upon his advent.[46]

The essential lines of Cyprian's earlier interpretation of the suffering of Christians also persisted in the face of the new persecution: the action of the Roman Empire was traced both to the malice of the devil and the permission of God; God was testing and proving the fidelity of Christians rather than correcting their failures; Christians were not being abandoned by an uncaring or wrathful God; they were being led to glory.

The apocalyptic battle and return of Jesus failed, however, to materialize on schedule. Although the immediate crisis passed, Cyprian still held to this eschatological interpretation of the conflict between the Christian communities and the Roman Empire.[47]

E. *The Latter Days*

After the intense eschatological expectation of the spring and summer of 253, the situation of Christians seems to have stabilized. Cyprian's correspondence and treatises over the next two years focus on problems internal to the churches: the replacement of unworthy bishops, the conflict over schismatic baptism, and the virtues of Christian life. In his treatise *On Patience*, however, the continuing concern with persecution and the return of Jesus is evident. Similarly, in the collection of scriptural texts which he gathered under various headings for his fellow bishops to use in exhorting their flocks to fidelity in time of trial, many of the themes of the earlier writings in anticipation of persecution are revisited.

Cyprian continued to interpret the afflictions to which his people were subjected as a trial or testing. Like Job and Tobias, they were

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[45] *Ep.* 57.3.3 (CCSL 3B:305).
[46] *Ep.* 57.4.3–4, 5.2 (CCSL 3A:306–10).
[47] *Ep.* 61.2.2–3 (CSEL 3.2:696).

called to demonstrate their fidelity to God. Since God judges the heart, they might show themselves followers of Christ not only by submitting to torture and execution but by voluntary renunciation of property and exile.[48] In either case, they should trust that God would give them strength to overcome temptation; as Christ had conquered, so would they.[49]

These writings, in a time of relative peace, do however evince a shift from themes which had been prominent shortly before. Cyprian focused less on the corporate struggle and triumph of the church and more on the trials and victories of individuals. The martyrs, for example, had only to close their eyes on this world as the sword falls; an instant later they would open them in Paradise, to the vision of God and Christ.[50] Although the return of Jesus continued to be affirmed, Cyprian acknowledged and provided for a delay. In commending the virtue of patience, for example, he observed that in the Book of Revelation, the saints and martyrs are told to wait for their vindication. Even Jesus had to wait patiently for a demonstration of his power.[51] A complementary development can be discerned in a renewed emphasis on vengeance: the Christian martyrs will themselves return with Jesus in glory to sit in judgment on their persecutors.[52]

Yet Cyprian did not renew appeals to the imminent return of Jesus and the corporate struggle of the church once the imperial persecution actually began again. The measures which Valerian decreed might easily have been interpreted as cataclysmic: Christians of the propertied class were to have all their goods confiscated; men who persisted in their defiance were to be executed, women to be exiled; imperial functionaries were to be impoverished and enslaved.[53] Nor were these idle threats. Enforcement had begun in Rome with the execution of Bishop Sixtus and his attendant clergy, as well as the confiscation of property.[54] In Carthage, Cyprian had already been arrested and exiled; his execution was anticipated; the clergy could no longer move about freely.[55] Entire local communities had been arrested and were being worked to death in

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[48] *De pat.* 17 (CCSL 3A:128); *Ad Fort.* 9, 12 (CCSL 3:197–98, 211–14).
[49] *Ad Fort.* 10, 12 (CCSL 3:198–201, 211–14).
[50] *Ad Fort.* 13 (CCSL 3:214–16).
[51] *De pat.* 21–24 (CCSL 3A:130–33).
[52] *Ad Fort.* 13 (CCSL 3:214–16).
[53] *Ep.* 80.1.2 (CSEL 3.2:839–40).
[54] *Ep.* 80.1.4 (CSEL 3.2:840).
[55] *Ep.* 77.2.1; 81.1.1–3; 80.1.1 (CSEL 3.2:835, 841, 839).

the imperial mines.[56] The lower classes were urged to avoid displays which would provoke imperial action, yet they too were exhorted to prepare for public confession and death.[57] Despite the gravity of the situation, the surviving record contains no appeal to the end of the world and the eschatological judgment of the nations either to explain God's plan and purpose or to exhort the fearful to fidelity.

In contrast, the interpretation of suffering as a following of Christ to glory, which had been developing since the end of the Decian persecution, broke into full blossom under Valerian's assault on the church. Cyprian informed the confessors that their enslavement and approaching deaths were actually the crowning of a virtuous and faithful life. Instead of correcting their sins, God was fighting in them, achieving victory over the devil in them, guiding them along the way to paradise.[58] Theirs was the true sacrifice which fulfilled and even replaced the prohibited celebration of the eucharist.[59] In these writings, addressed to confessors who would surely die at hard labor in the imperial mines, no mention is made of penance or correction of life. Similarly, in the instruction sent from exile to his church at Carthage, Cyprian spoke only of God's inspiration and power dwelling and working in them.[60] As he looked forward to his own death, Cyprian prayed not for swift vindication but that Christ would keep his flock safe within the church. Divine protection, however, had come to mean not peace for the church within the Empire but strength for each Christian in the face of death.[61]

F. *Analysis*

Two principles served as the basis for each of Cyprian's successive interpretations of the suffering of Christians: all events are under the control of God, and divine purpose is responsive to the moral choices of humans. On this foundation he built in different ways, adapting his

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[56] Cyprian's letter of exhortation was addressed to nine bishops; it indicated the presence of young women and children among the confessors, *Ep.* 76.6.2 (CSEL 3.2:832). Three responses have survived, *Ep.* 77–79 (CSEL 3.2:834–39).

[57] *Ep.* 81.1.4 (CSEL 3.2:841–42).

[58] *Ep.* 76.1.3–4, 2.3, 4.2–5.1 (CSEL 3.2:828–32).

[59] *Ep.* 76.3.1–4.2 (CSEL 3.2:830–31). The reference to the cup of salvation in 4.1–2 suggests a further eucharistic symbol.

[60] *Ep.* 81.1.4 (CSEL 3.2:842).

[61] *Ep.* 81.1.5 (CSEL 3.2:842).

explanations to the times and seasons. The Decian persecution and the subsequent schisms were presented as God's correcting and cleansing of the church; they provided an opportunity for individual and corporate renewal. The plague and threat of persecution which followed were interpreted not as punishment for sin but as testing and perfecting of faith, as a drawing away from earthly hopes and kindling of the desire for a heavenly reward, which would soon be fulfilled in the return of Jesus. Finally, the Valerian persecution could be explained as a reward for a prior virtuous life, the path of following Christ to heavenly glory.

The adoption and then the abandonment of Cyprian's first interpretation of persecution would seem to have been closely related to the circumstances. When so many of the Christians failed to maintain their baptismal promises during the persecution, the assertion that they were being chastened served to call not only the lapsed but the entire community to repentance and reform. Once the fallen had done penance and been readmitted to communion by bishops claiming to act on the authority of God, however, persecution could no longer be explained as divine response to the presence of sinners in the church. That would have supported the Novatianist charge that the bishops had sullied the purity of the church by accepting the idolaters into communion.

Thus the assertion that Christ would soon return to judge not only responded to the threat of renewed persecution but proved useful in justifying the bishops' decision to grant peace to the sacrificers: they were being brought into the church so that they could be presented before the tribunal of Christ. A shift in the community's expectation of its own endurance and its future within imperial society may have been even more significant than this administrative convenience, however, in encouraging eschatological hope in the face of persecution. These more popular factors will be examined in turn.

During the summer of 252, the divisions within the church in North Africa were at their zenith. A formal communion of laxist bishops had been established, and its newly ordained representative in Carthage counted many of Cyprian's former presbyters among his clergy. A rigorist bishop had also been sent from Rome to take up residence, though apparently without the significant following enjoyed by the laxist. Within Cyprian's own church unhappiness with the episcopal decision to delay the reconciliation of those who had sacrificed continued to mount, not only among their relatives and dependents but also among the entire people because of the disparity in the treatment of the sinners. Those sacrificers who had recovered after being granted peace

while in danger of death from the plague enjoyed the church's communion while their healthier fellows continued to do public penance and risk damnation by dying before they could be granted reconciliation to the church. Amid these conflicts inside and outside their communion, Cyprian's followers could not have enjoyed a secure sense of the future of their church.

At the same time, Christians may have questioned the continued existence of their distinct religious community within imperial society. In the past, they had been more or less tolerated; compromises between their baptismal renunciation of idolatry and the requirements of Roman civil and commercial law had been developed and implemented. The Decian persecution had shaken this sense of security; the threat of a renewal of proscription under Galerius may have convinced them that they could not endure. The *honestiores* knew that they could not again protect their property and dependents by accepting certificates of fictitious compliance with imperial law. The *humiliores* may have wondered how they could long continue to avoid those economic contacts which would endanger their protective anonymity. The confiscation of property belonging to the wealthy Christians would also have threatened that financial base which supported the destitute through the church's dole. An actively prosecuted group, moreover, could hardly hope to win new members, despite its courageous witness of faith. Thus for many Christians, a stable future for the church in the Roman Empire would have seemed implausible.

The persecution and the plague, the loss of property and social status, the isolation forced upon a now secretive society, all would have diminished the Christians' stake in the life of the Empire. Thus they may have been well disposed to accept Cyprian's suggestions that the age would soon pass away, that Christ would soon intervene to rescue the church, punish their oppressors, and reward their fidelity by heavenly blessings. The logic may have been quite simple: God could not allow the devil and the Empire to triumph over the church; but the devil and the Empire were evidently determined to eradicate the church; therefore, God would quickly intervene to overthrow the Empire and cast the devil into the pit from which he would never emerge.

Apparently, Cyprian and other Christians in Carthage could not imagine the survival of the church outside imperial civilization. Organized monasticism beyond the reach of the Empire's bureaucracy was still more than half a century in the future. Indeed, from this perspective the trickle of hermits and cenobites into the desert which would turn into

full flood during the next century might have been a defensive response to Diocletian's persecution rather than an offensive move against Constantine's religious imperialism.

Yet the eschatological hope was disappointed. The sign of the Son of Man did not appear in the heavens. Instead, the threat of persecution passed; the crisis of reconciling the sacrificers was successfully negotiated; the attraction of the laxists waned; the rigorists became increasingly isolated. Cyprian and his colleagues could direct their energies to battling one another over the appropriate means of admitting refugees from the rival communions. This controversy over rebaptism focused, not on the eschatological judgment of the heavenly Jesus, but on the role of the earthly bishop in protecting the church from encroaching evil and projecting its existence into the future. The eschatological moment had passed.

When Valerian did finally menace the entire church with destruction and death, Cyprian and his colleagues turned not to an imminent cosmic cataclysm but to the power of God already at work in the church, to the victory which was actually being achieved. As Cyprian maneuvered toward his public trial and confession before the proconsul in Carthage, he called his church not to witness the return of Jesus but rather to hear the Spirit speaking in a martyr bishop. The words were remembered and recorded; his blood sealed a legacy of monarchial bishops, effective rituals, and enduring communities. The servants of institutional continuity even preserved the record of the failed eschatology.

THE READING OF THE PERSONAL LETTER AS THE BACKGROUND FOR THE READING OF THE SCRIPTURES IN THE EARLY CHURCH

Claude E. Cox

Twenty-five years ago I became interested in the place of "the reader" in the worship of the early church. Professor Ferguson wrote to me at the time:

> I have noticed in a recent Blackwell's catalogue Robert Martineau, *The Office and Work of a Reader.* You should also consult standard histories of the organization and ministry of the church. Also, check entries in the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities* and Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church.* I hope that this will help you in your plans for your paper.[1]

I ordered the Martineau book, which, though it has some helpful comments about Justin Martyr's description of reading in worship in his day, is limited for the most part to reading in the contemporary Anglican church.[2]

The moment for that paper apparently passed. A year and a half later I was at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, wondering where to pursue further graduate work. Professor Ferguson wrote me and suggested that I might consider Septuagint Studies at the University of Toronto with J. W. Wevers.[3] And so it was that I returned to Toronto. It was in Wevers's Septuagint criticism class, where we were considering the various sub-versions—including the Armenian—that I recalled an aside that Professor Ferguson had once made in a lecture on the early church. As he was describing the spread of early Christianity—through Syria, Armenia, Georgia—Professor Ferguson made the comment that these areas would be interesting for someone to work in because they were relatively virgin territory. Armed with that comment, I undertook a dissertation with Wevers involving the Armenian version, an area of

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[1] Ferguson to Cox, letter, 8 February 1971.

[2] *The Office and Work of a Reader* (London: A. R. Mowbray & Co. Ltd., 1970). It is cited in the bibliography of the article "Reader" by Ferguson in *EEC* (ed. Everett Ferguson; New York/London: Garland, 1990) 776–77.

[3] Ferguson to Cox, letter, 20 September 1972.

studies in which my esteemed teacher in Texas has maintained a personal interest ever since. Now after the delay of the intervening years, I welcome the opportunity to return in this festschrift to the questions I had about the role of the reader in the worship of the early church.

A. *The Earliest Church and the Private Household*

The earliest churches met in private households, and this remained true for the first two or three centuries.[4] These meeting places might be the larger homes of those who were well off or an upper floor apartment, as at Troas (Acts 20:8–9). In larger cities several house churches might meet, each accommodating twenty or thirty people, and without much contact one with the other.[5] We encounter these house churches in Paul's letters; for example, Prisca and Aquila and the church that met in their house at Rome are greeted by Paul and the church that met at Gaius's house at Corinth (Rom 16:3, 23); a few years earlier Paul had sent greetings to Corinth from Prisca and Aquila, who at that time had a church in their house at Ephesus (1 Cor 16:8, 19); at Colossae a church met in Philemon's house. Paul addressed his letters to such local groups, and in his early correspondence we see him enjoining his recipients to read his letter publicly: "Greet all the brothers and sisters with a holy kiss. I solemnly command you by the Lord that this letter be read (ἀναγνωσθῆναι τὴν ἐπιστολήν) to all of them" (1 Thess 5:27). He can direct that a letter once read be passed on to another local group nearby (and then returned perhaps): "And when this letter has been read among you [at Colossae], have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you read also the letter from Laodicea" (Col 4:16). Some letters were clearly intended to be circular in distribution: for example, "To the churches of Galatia" (Gal 1:2); perhaps also 1 Peter, "To the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia"

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[4] L. Michael White, *Building God's House in the Roman World. Architectural Adaptation among Pagans, Jews, and Christians* (ASOR Library of Biblical and Near Eastern Archeology; Baltimore/London: Johns Hopkins, 1990). He delineates four early stages: the private house (ca. 50–150); *domus ecclesiae*—an adapted or renovated private house (ca. 150–250); continuation and enlargement of what was true in the second stage (ca. 250–313); and basilical (314–).

[5] Peter Lampe, "'Family' in Church and Society of New Testament Times," *Affirmation* 5 (1992) 8–9.

(1:1); and certainly Revelation, with its admonitions in letters to seven churches.[6] Even a book such as Hebrews was intended for reading before a gathered Christian congregation.[7] Such gatherings were relatively informal, even somewhat disorganized at times if one can judge from 1 Corinthians. They included men, women, and children, masters and slaves, and possibly traveling teachers or prophets.

Christians of Jewish background were accustomed, of course, to hearing the Law and Prophets read in the synagogue, but neither the Law nor the Prophets, not even the Writings, include the genre of the personal letter. Such letters extended the reach of the teacher, since teaching was no longer dependent upon the presence of the teacher.[8] In such circumstances the writer had to include some mark of genuineness for the readers; for example, "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the mark in every letter of mine; it is the way I write" (2 Thess 3:17). The apostle's letter, read publicly, was in the category of a homily or sermon.[9] But in saying that, I am getting several steps ahead of myself. Let me go back a few steps.

Personal letters made their way back and forth across the Roman Empire. Among vast quantities of papyri, one finds also this particular type, which we may assume often was read to, or its contents shared with, an entire household.[10] Three examples are readily at hand. In the first case, an Egyptian wife named Isias complains to her husband when she learns from a letter that he is not coming directly home after a period of seclusion at the Serapeum at Memphis. She tells him, "I myself and the child and all the household are in good health and think of you always." The letter was delivered by a messenger who brought further

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[6] On "the careful and conscious structure of the letters" in Revelation, see Kenneth R. R. Gros Louis in *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*, The Bible in Literature Courses (ed. Gros Louis, James S. Ackerman, Thayer S. Warshaw; New York/Nashville: Abingdon, 1974) 336–39.

[7] F. V. Filson, *'Yesterday': A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Ch. 13* (SBT 2, 2d ser. 4; Naperville: Allenson, 1967) 19, 82. Oddly, Filson does not mention the reader in his now dated article "The Christian Teacher in the First Century," *JBL* 60 (1941) 317–28.

[8] Cf. the comments concerning Matthew's Gospel in C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament* (BNTC Companion, vol. 1; London: Adam & Charles Black, ²1966) 73.

[9] Moule, *Worship in the New Testament* (ESW 9; London: Lutterworth, 1967 [1961]) 45.

[10] See the chapter "Family Letters" in Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (LEC 5; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986) 71–76; also John L. White's comments about "the literary letter tradition," "documentary letters," "literary letters of instruction," and "ordinary letters" in *Light from Ancient Letters* (FFNT; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986) 218–20.

news of her husband's situation. Isias's statement that his mother is also annoyed indicates clearly that the letter and or its news was shared with her too.[11] In a second- or third-century letter a person named Irenaeus sends greetings to his brother Apollinarius. In addition to business matters, he says, "Many salutations to your wife and to Serenus and to all who love you, each by name."[12] Finally in a letter from son to father, Thonis complains that he has neither heard from his father Arion nor received a visit from him with regard to his instruction with a teacher. He concludes his letter by saying, "I send salutations to all our folk, each by name, together with those who love us. Salutations also to my teachers. Goodbye, my lord and father, and may you prosper, as I pray, for many years along with my brothers. . . ."[13] Such letters as these indicate that the contents of personal letters were read to or shared with members of households.

Roman citizens were accustomed to the phenomenon of the public reading of official documents such as the Emperor Claudius's letter to the Alexandrians, dated AD 41. In *P. Lond.* 1912 it begins with a proclamation by the praefect Lucius Aemelius Rectus, in which the praefect says that he has deemed it necessary to display the letter so that the citizens of Alexandria can read it one by one since the population was too large "to be present at the reading of the most sacred and most beneficent letter to the city."[14] Such postings go all the way back to the days of Hammurabi and beyond.

Christians were not the only ones to use the letter format. The Stoic philosopher Seneca (ca. 4 BC–AD 65) wrote *Epistles* to his friend Lucilius;[15] the first-century Neopythagorean philosopher and magician

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[11] C. K. Barrett, ed., *The New Testament Background: Selected Documents* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961) no. 20. This is *P. Lond.* 42, dated 168 BC. It is also found in A. S. Hunt and C. C. Edgar, eds., *Select Papyri* (LCL) no. 97, and as no. 34 in White, *Light from Ancient Letters*, with a helpful introduction to the entire Serapeum correspondence.

[12] Barrett, *Background*, no. 22 = *B.G.U.* 27 = Hunt and Edgar, no. 113. Similarly in *P. Oxy.* 1296 (= Hunt and Edgar, no. 137) of the third century AD, Aurelius Dius sends greetings to several people at the end of a letter to his father. Stowers suggests that these people may all be members of his household. See *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, 73–74.

[13] Barrett, *Background*, no. 33 = *Rev. Ég.* 1919, p. 201 = Hunt and Edgar, no. 133. This letter dates to the early third century AD.

[14] Barrett, *Background*, no. 45 = Hunt and Edgar, no. 212.

[15] Examples in Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation, A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (LEC 4; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986).

Apollonius of Tyana also wrote letters.[16] The letters of such philosophers might be read aloud "in remote communities."[17] Koester points out, however, that the purpose of Paul's letters, for example, was different from that of "the normal business of the philosophical market": his letters "are not didactic compositions but instruments of propaganda and community management."[18] In the Jewish realm one can mention the *Letter of Aristeas,* as late as the late second century BC, a propagandistic apology for the Septuagint.[19]

Paul's use of the letter form established a genre in Christian circles. One could say that it continues to this day because the Bishop of Rome periodically communicates the church's teaching in letters. The apostle's example was followed by others whose writings bear such names as Peter, John, and Jude. About the same time the last letter of what becomes the canonical NT was written, we find the tradition of letter writing continuing in Clement of Rome's *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (ca. 96); there follow Ignatius's letters *To the Romans, Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Smyrnaeans, Philadelphians* (ca. 110–15); Polycarp's *To the Philippians* (ca. 117?); and *The Letter of the Church of Smyrna* or *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* (ca. 156). Finally we might mention that Justin Martyr's *Apology* is addressed to Antonius Pius (138–61). It contains mid-second-century evidence for the reading and exposition of Scriptures in Christian worship. We will return to it after a consideration of the place of reading in the synagogue.

B. *Reading in the Synagogue*

The work of rebuilding Jerusalem included the public reading of the Torah—some form of the Pentateuch—by Ezra, the Persian "Minister of State for Jewish Affairs" in the mid- or late fifth century BC. The

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[16] R. J. Penella, ed., *The Letters of Apollonius of Tyana: A Critical Text with Prolegomena, Translation and Commentary* (Mnemosyne. Bibliotheca classica/philologica Batava. Supplements 56; Leiden: Brill, 1979).

[17] D. Gerhard Delling, *Worship in the New Testament* (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1962) 92 n. 2, citing P. Glaue, *Die Vorlesung heiliger Schriften in Gottesdiensten* (1907) 29 n. 37.

[18] Helmut Koester, *Introduction to the New Testament,* vol. 1, *History, Culture, and Religion of the Hellenistic Age* (HFF; Philadelphia: Fortress/Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1982) 356.

[19] E.g., Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian,* vol. 1, *The Persian and Greek Periods* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992) 179–80.

account of this public reading in Nehemiah 8 contains the elements of synagogue liturgy: bringing the Torah scroll (v. 4), opening the Torah scroll (5), the blessing (*b^{e}raka,* 6a), the communal "Amen" (6b), perhaps verse-by-verse translation into Aramaic (8).[20]

The precise origins of the synagogue are obscure. It was, at any rate, an institution of diaspora Judaism from at least the mid-third century BC, according to Grabbe, who also suggests that its entry into Palestine came rather late, indeed not very long before AD 70 and into the remotest parts of the country first.[21]

The Mishnah, in *Meg.* 4:3, provides the principal parts of the service in the synagogue:

> the recitation of the *Shema'*, the Prayer, the reading of the Torah, the reading of the prophets, the priestly blessing. To this was added the translation of the portions of Scripture read aloud . . . and its exposition by means of an elevating discourse.[22]

This tractate deals with issues involving the reading of Esther on the Feast of Purim but goes on to treat the public reading of Scripture at other times. The one who reads the Law stands, but the person who reads Esther may stand or sit. We may note that the person who reads the Law is not to read less than three verses, no more than one at a time, so that the targumist can follow; three verses at a time from the Prophets where also verses may be left out (4:4). A minor could read the Law and interpret but could not recite the *Shema'* with its benedictions or go before the ark or raise his hands as the priests did in their benedictions. (4:6)[23]

The *archisynagogus* decided who should read the Scriptures, which were wrapped in linen cloths and lay in a case in the ark, the main object in the synagogue. The ὑπερέτης or διάκονος brought out the Scrolls for reading (and also taught the children to read). Seating placed the more distinguished members of a congregation at the front; younger people sat behind; women probably sat apart from men: seating was

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[20] Rolf Rendtorff, *The Old Testament: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1991 [German ed. 1983]) 281 (with literature cited). Rendtorff comments that this text offers us a reflection of how the synagogue service—or its predecessor—was held at the time the text was composed.

[21] *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian,* 2.529, 541.

[22] Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (175 BC–AD 135) (ed. Geza Vermes, Fergus Millar, Matthew Black; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979) 2.448.

[23] For the entire informative tractate, see Herbert Danby, *The Mishnah* (London: Oxford, 1933) 201–7.

therefore hierarchical. In Jesus' time the reading of the Torah was followed by one from the Prophets, as we see in Luke 4:16–30 at Nazareth. The reading was followed by an exposition of the passage that had been read, the speaker—apparently any competent individual—standing on a raised area.[24]

It bears repeating that the object of Sabbath meetings was instruction in the Torah rather than worship in the narrower sense. The dedicatory inscription for the Jerusalem synagogue founded by Theodotus (beginning of the first century AD) states that it was built "for the reading of the Law and the teaching of the precepts."[25] This means that the "service" was rather different from what we might think of as a "service of worship," that is, a time of adoration and praise.

The earliest Christians, Jewish in background, were well acquainted with the public reading of sacred texts. They may also have heard the occasional letter read in the synagogue (cf. Acts 9:2). At any rate, it is probably true that Christianity's attachment to the written word is largely an inheritance from Judaism.[26]

C. *Public Reading in the Earliest Church*

The earliest churches met under private auspices, either in a *domus* or in an apartment, in the latter case in rather crowded circumstances. The group thus gathered in a *domus* to share the Supper must have occupied the *triclinium,* the dining room, where there were dining couches for a limited number. Here the most important hosting family members and

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[24] See Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 2.423–63 *inter alia*. Burtchaell states that the ὑπερέτης would serve as "master of ceremonies" at Scripture readings, under the leadership of the community chief. James T. Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church. Public Services and Offices in the Earliest Christian Communities* (Cambridge: University Press, 1992) 247. *From Synagogue to Church* offers only one paragraph under the heading "The Reader" in the synagogue (p. 258) in an otherwise very stimulating discussion.

[25] Cited in Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, 2.425.

[26] William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press, 1989) 300, who has a note on this observation: cf. J. Leipoldt & S. Morenz, *Heilige Schriften* (Leipzig, 1953) 116–17. I am indebted to A. Pietersma for bringing Harris's book to my attention.

friends reclined, closest to the teacher—and surely the reader—while the rest of the group spilled out into the peristyle.[27]

If we ask "Who read?" we meet at once the larger question of literacy. The early church lived in a mostly oral culture where the great majority of people were illiterate. Harris suggests for Rome and Italy in our period that "the level of male literacy was well below the 20–30% range which prevailed in, say, England of the period 1580–1700." For women the evidence suggests a literacy rate "below, perhaps far below, 10%."[28] The number of people who could read a text was therefore severely restricted, limited likely to a handful of men, even to as few as one or two in a small congregational setting.[29]

In the house church at Corinth, there is not yet any public reading of Scripture. When they come together, Paul says, "each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation" (ἕκαστος ψαλμὸν ἔχει, διδαχὴν ἔχει, ἀποκάλυψιν ἔχει, γλῶσσαν ἔχει, ἑρμηνείαν ἔχει, 1 Cor 14:26). No one has "a reading." Further, one may note that reading, public or private, is not among the διαιρέσεις χαρισμάτων, "varieties of service," that Paul lists in 1 Corinthians 12. The gift of the Spirit does not enable one to read: a gift of the Spirit does not replace an education! And that is an important point: the educated, that is, literate, person had a significant role to play in the worship of the early church as soon as there were texts to read. The enthusiasts might have a revelation or a "tongue," but only the educated person could read.

It would appear to me that the first reader of a letter to a church might have been its bearer. One may note, for example, Eph 6:21, where we read, "So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus will tell you everything." This is consistent with the role of the

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[27] Carolyn Osiek, "The Family in Early Christianity: 'Family Values' Revisited," *CBQ* 58 (1996) 16–17.

[28] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 259. Harris mentions a factor in literacy which the bespectacled readers of this article might overlook, namely the lack of eyeglasses in antiquity: "Those who had poor eyesight from childhood, if they survived at all, would have found that the functions of the written word were limited by that fact: what was written on the wall or on the book-roll might be very hard or impossible to make out" (15).

[29] Harris's assertion corrects the optimistic remarks of someone such as Moule: "Although it is impossible to go far beyond guess-work, for lack of data, one may guess, then, that most Christians of the NT period could read." See *The Birth of the New Testament*, 184. Grabbe states that many Jews were illiterate and that to what extent the biblical text was read by the average Jew is uncertain (*Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, 2.542).

messenger who reads a message but also conveys other information orally, as in the first of the three personal letters cited earlier. The reader might have been the head of the household in which the church met, since the head of a Roman household was responsible for all aspects of domestic life therein, including religion.[30] In the case of a household headed by a female such as Chloe, perhaps an educated slave was designated to read. In 1 Tim 4:13 it is the apostle's appointed church leader—called "the Lord's servant" who "do[es] the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim 2:24 and 4:5)—who either reads himself or at least sees that there is public reading of Scripture.[31] Did the reader stand for the reading of letters which were not yet "canonical"?[32]

The reader's task at times included the explanation—perhaps on a running basis—of the text that was being read. That is what Mark 13:14 (|| Matt 24:15) means: "let the reader understand." Such a cryptic text as Mark 13 must have raised many questions, even as it does today; and the fact that that comment, directed at the public reader, occurs only there in the Gospel indicates that such apocalyptic passages must have been explicated by the reader. We might compare with such commentary the *pesher*-type exposition that we know from Qumran where, for example, in the *Pesher on Habakkuk,* a sentence or two of the text is quoted and then there follows "a comment, usually short, introduced by: "The interpretation refers to. . . ." The interpretations relate all the prophet's statements to events of the present or the recent past. . . ."[33] The same might well be true of the Book of Revelation, which begins with a blessing both for the public reader and the hearers, "for the time is near"—immediately raising the question: "What time?"

The texts the reader was reading are of course written in Greek, "the language of culture."[34] However, across Asia Minor various local languages persisted, and it may well be that in smaller centers Greek was

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[30] E. Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 129.

[31] "This [i.e., πρόσεχε] will include his own reading (cf. Tit 1:9) and that of any official to whom it was deputed." W. Lock, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1924) 53.

[32] It was, of course, the rule that the reader stood in the synagogue to read the sacred text. Ferguson describes a cultic scene in the *Villa Item* ("House of Mysteries") outside Pompeii, in the first scene of which there is "a naked boy who is reading from a scroll," but does not mention whether the boy is standing or not. This description is in relation to his discussion of the "Dionysiac Mysteries." See *Backgrounds*, 208.

[33] Koester, *Introduction*, 1.260.

[34] Koester, *Introduction*, 1.251.

so poorly understood that the reader was responsible for providing a translation into the local tongue. Harris suggests, for example, that Galatian Celtic probably continued to be a spoken language in Galatia itself (Lycaonian is mentioned in Acts 14:11); that many of the Cappodocians probably continued to be ignorant of Greek; and that "it is unlikely that the northern territories of Bithynia, Paphlagonia and Pontus, which were not heavily urbanized, ever came near to completing the transition to Greek."[35]

In the synagogue the Scrolls were kept in the ark. The Roman house included a *lararium,* "household shrine," "a wooden cupboard or a stone or masonry niche or aedicula for images or paintings of the household deities."[36] Where were the scrolls, then later codexes, kept which were read in the houses and apartments of the faithful? Perhaps they were kept in the *lararium* since that was already a place for sacred objects. One wonders what kind of access congregations had to letters and Gospels in the first century. Writing material, that is, papyrus, was relatively expensive and probably beyond the means of poorer, rural churches. By the time of 2 Peter 3:16—late first century?—Paul's letters were known as a group or collection since it uses the words "in all his letters."

This brings us to the very difficult question of what was available for reading in the early decades of the church. In the earliest period in Judea, the followers of Jesus continued to hear the (OT) Scriptures read in the Temple (Acts 2:46) or the synagogue (cf. John 9:22). This seems to have continued for a period of time in Asia Minor and Greece, to judge from the Book of Acts. Early Christian gatherings likely included a Messianic interpretation of what people had heard in the Temple or synagogue.[37] Thus an oral tradition of teaching developed that preceded any availability of written texts (cf. 1 Cor 15:3: παρέδωκα . . . ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον). As late as circa 112 in Bithynia, Pliny makes no mention of the public reading of any text in his summary of Christian worship. He does say that they "recite[d] by turns a form of words to Christ as a

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[35] Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 186–87.

[36] Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 137.

[37] For such a Messianic reading of the OT *in the synagogue*, see F. F. Bruce's comments about the longer reading of the Western text of Acts 18:4, which says that in the Corinthian synagogue Paul "inserted the name of the Lord Jesus" as the Scriptures were read (*New Testament History* [Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1972] 315).

god" (*Ep.* 10.96).[38] If this does not refer to some sort of hymn, it may refer to what had been committed to memory on the basis of oral teaching. On the other hand, various scholars conjecture that collections of *Testimonia* existed prior to or even concurrent with more extensive writings.[39]

Delling argues strenuously and at some length that there is no justification for maintaining that there were readings from the OT in the worship of either early Jewish or Gentile Christianity. For the former he allows that it is conceivable that there were readings from the Prophets and Psalms but says that they were not essential. Rather, Christian services had "a stamp of their own" because attendance at the synagogue continued. As for Gentile Christianity, Delling concedes that the Christian church "begins in part in the ordering of its worship with its inheritance from the synagogue, yet that is not clear till the second century." He goes on immediately to say that "conclusions with reference to primitive Christianity cannot be drawn from the ancient church or from the synagogue. Between these two a gap yawns in primitive Gentile Christianity, which has no formal connexion with the reading of the OT Scriptures, either backwards or forwards."[40]

It seems to me that Delling's "gap" is too sharply drawn. Aune also states that there is "no clear evidence that the OT was read in Christian worship before circa AD 155."[41] The reference is, of course, to Justin's remarks about worship at Rome in his time, to which we will come shortly.

Both Delling and Aune must set aside the witness of 1 Tim 4:13. There Timothy is admonished, ἕως ἔρχομαι πρόσεχε τῇ ἀναγνώσει, τῇ παρακλήσει, τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ ("Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhorting, to teaching"). The "Scriptures"

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[38] J. Stevenson, ed., *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church to* AD *337* (London: SPCK, 1968) 14. Stevenson notes that the words "to recite a form of words" (*carmen dicere*) *may* mean "to sing a hymn" (15), which, in fact, is the translation—i.e., "recite a hymn antiphonally to Christ, as a god"—in Henry Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church* (2d ed.; London: Oxford, 1963) 4. Bettenson has a note too in which he states: "*carmen*, generally translated 'hymm,' may mean any set form of words; here perhaps a responsorial or antiphonal psalm, or some kind of litany" (4–5). Stevenson's edition is cited by Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 474.

[39] Cf. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, 83–85 (citing Dodd and others); Leonhard Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970) 214.

[40] Delling, *Worship in the New Testament*, 92–93.

[41] D. E. Aune, "Worship, Early Christian," *ABD* 6.983, citing Bauer (1930).

here are the OT in Greek, almost certainly. As Goppelt says, "It [i.e., the OT] alone stood as the 'scriptures.'"[42] A dating of "AD 100 or slightly later"—so Aune[43]—does not resolve that difficulty: in Ephesus at least by the turn of the century and perhaps quite a bit earlier, regardless of the letter's connection with Paul, the reading of the OT had its part in Christian worship and was likely the basis for "exhortation and teaching."[44] And that is important to note: the OT functioned as the basis for exhortation and teaching; it was not—and is not—an unnecessary appendage to Christian theology. The connection with the synagogue should not be underestimated for early Christianity generally, whether Jewish or Gentile: as Goppelt points out, even the terminology for reading—ἀναγινώσκω and ἀνάγνωσις—"they took over . . . which had been developed there [i.e., in the synagogue] for cultic readings."[45] Similarly, the references to ἱερὰ γράμματα and πᾶσα γραφή (2 Tim. 3:15–16) refer to the OT, and the reference in these terms makes the most sense in a context where they were used "for teaching."

The importance of the reading of texts in Christian worship was that most people had to learn from what was read publicly. Few individuals

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[42] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 162, citing G. Schrenk, *TWNT* 1.750–61.

[43] Aune, "Worship," 983.

[44] Cf. the pointed remarks in Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 284–285, even though he appears to date 1 Timothy later: "There is no record from this period [when letters written between communities as well as those from leaders such as Paul and Ignatius were read in the assembly] that the scriptures (the law, the prophets, and the writings) were read, or that the gospels were being circulated and read out, but it is a reasonable surmise that they were. Here was a group whose founders in every city had made themselves *personae non gratae* at synagogue meetings by being first on their feet to explain what the scriptures really meant. When, for their pains, they were finally unwelcome in their communities for being intolerably contentious, and chose (or were obliged) to keep company by themselves, nothing could be more certain than their immediate need to meet and pore over those scriptures to their own satisfaction. Thus the primeval act of the postexilic synagogue—indeed, perhaps its most typical act—had to be continued by the Christian dissidents. And as the anecdotes about Jesus were circulated, there can be no doubt that they found pride of place in the assembly readings." Burtchaell emphasizes the continuities between the synagogue and the early church; I think he is right to do so.

[45] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 214 n. 49. His remarks are to the point: "A familiarity with the Old Testament (1 Cor 10:11) necessary for the understanding of Jesus' appearance as well as knowledge about the history of Jesus [was] undoubtedly imparted to the Church and even to the Gentile Christians to an amazing degree (Rom. 7:1; *1 Clem.*) through catechesis, but the liturgical readings first gave central expression to the authoritative meaning of these two fundamental aspects of Christian teaching."

possessed the sacred books—an exception is Paul (2 Tim 4:13)—and even fewer could afford to underwrite the expense of commissioning someone to author (cf. perhaps Theophilus: Luke 1:3–4) or copy for them. One can draw an analogy with places today where few copies of the Scriptures exist.

D. *From Personal Letters to Canonization*

The earliest specifically Christian writings to be read in worship were the letters of Paul. As the first century wore on, the letters of others joined the Pauline letters; the Gospels may have been available for reading at some Christian gatherings. Goppelt suggests that circa AD 80 Mark's Gospel had gained authoritative standing throughout the Church alongside the oral tradition.[46] Such readings occupied the place of a sermon but did not take the place of the Scripture reading, that is, reading from the OT.[47]

The public reading of the letters and Gospels played an essential role in the process of their canonization, as indeed the Muratorian Canon makes clear. Toward the end of the fragment we read:

> The Apocalypse also of John, and of Peter only we receive, which some of our friends will not have read in the Church. But the Shepherd was written quite lately in our times in the city of Rome by Hermas, while his brother Pius, the bishop [ca. 140–153], was sitting in the chair of the church of the city of Rome; and therefore it ought indeed to be read, but it cannot to the end of time be publicly read in the Church to the people, either among the prophets, who are complete in number, or among the Apostles.[48]

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[46] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 163. There is the question of the extent of the use of the written Gospel. Cf. Gundry's recent note, in the concluding paragraph of which he states: "All in all, then, despite the strength of evidence for borrowing from books, especially Matthew, that were later canonized, [H.] Koester remains correct at least in his judgment that as yet we have no convincing evidence so early as the NT or subapostolic literature for a bookish meaning of εὐαγγέλιον. Nonetheless, the recording of Jesus' oral gospel in those books and the derivation of Christians' oral gospel from them led naturally to a subsequent use of εὐαγγέλιον for the books themselves." See Robert H. Gundry, "ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ: How Soon a Book?" *JBL* 115/2 (1996) 321–25. This question is of interest for the issue of reading from written Gospels in the early church.

[47] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 162.

[48] Stevenson, ed., *A New Eusebius*, 146.

The distinction between writings for public and private reading is one of authority: authoritative versus nonauthoritative. In Rome circa 180 or 190, the Apocalypse of John is read and apparently also the Apocalypse of Peter, although some do not want the latter read publicly. Finally, the Shepherd of Hermas ought to be read, but not publicly. "Not to be read" means "noncanonical."[49]

The "canonical" collection of Christian writings in Rome toward the end of the second century consists of four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the letters of Paul to churches (Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, Thessalonians, Romans, and a second letter to the Corinthians and Thessalonians) and to individuals (Philemon, Titus, and Timothy [two]); Jude; two letters of John; and the Apocalypse of John. The Wisdom of Solomon is also in the list, after the letters of John and before the Apocalypse. Presumably it is these writings that one would have heard read publicly.

We are better informed about the public reading of Scripture in the congregation(s) at Rome and environs than for any other location in the second century. There is the Muratorian Canon, just noted, but also the information provided by Justin Martyr in his *Apology* and by *2 Clement*. As Aune says, Justin provides the most complete order of worship before the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus (ca. 215). We have a description of two services, first, a baptismal service followed by a eucharist (*Apol.* 1, 61–66) and, second, a regular Sunday worship service (67.1–8),[50] the relevant section of which is as follows:

> Καὶ τῇ τοῦ ἡλίου λεγομένῃ ἡμέρᾳ πάντων κατὰ πόλεις ἢ ἀγροὺς μενόντων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ συνέλευσις γίνεται, καὶ τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκεται, μέχρις ἐγχωρεῖ. 4. Εἶτα παυσαμένου τοῦ ἀναγινώσκοντος ὁ προεστὼς διὰ λόγου τὴν νουθεσίαν καὶ πρόκλησιν τῆς τῶν καλῶν τούτων μιμήσεως ποιεῖται. (67.3–4)[51]
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> And on the day called Sunday there is a gathering together in the same place of all who live in a city or a rural district. The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. Then when the

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[49] Cf. W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (trans. from the 14th rev. [German] ed. by A. J. Mattill Jr.; London: SCM, 1970) 346–47.

[50] Aune, "Worship," 977.

[51] André Wartelle, *Saint Justin Apologies, Introduction, Texte critique, Traduction, Commentaire et Index* (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1987).

> reader ceases, the president in a discourse admonishes and urges the imitation of these good things.[52]

The order of worship in Justin's experience consists of the reading, an admonition by the president, prayers, communion, and an offering.

The public readings—read by someone other than the leader (προεστώς), by this time "the bishop," "a kind of presiding or chief elder"[53]—consist of "memoirs of the apostles" or "the writings of the prophets." This is probably not a case of an exclusive either-or and indicates that there was no set format for the readings: that is, it could be one or the other, maybe even both. The "memoirs of the apostles" refers to the Gospels, the reading of which has sometimes been said to have developed as early as the second generation on the basis of the liturgical style of Matthew's Gospel.[54] The "writings of the prophets" are all the writings of the OT for Justin. One may compare αἱ βίβλοι τῶν προφητῶν (31.7; 44.12).[55] By then, second century, the codex form was coming into use; thus it was possible for a reader to make and find selections with relative ease.

The antecedent of "these good things"—or "these excellent examples"[56]—is the content of the readings; thus it would appear that the choice of readings was not haphazard but rather agreed upon between the reader and the one who delivered the exhortation.

Justin says that the reading continues μέχρις ἐγχωρεῖ, "as long as time permits." The intent of this remark seems to be that a substantial amount of text was read, that is, as much as possible, given the constraints of a service which included other parts. If that is so, Justin's remark recognizes the importance of the reading as a teaching device in a situation where a congregation's only opportunity to learn the Scriptures was through oral delivery.

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[52] Eng. trans. from E. Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak: Faith and Life in the First Three Centuries* (Austin: Sweet, 1971) 81.

[53] Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, 89.

[54] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 214.

[55] P. Glaue, *Die Vorlesung heiliger Schriften in Gottesdiensten. I. Teil. Bis zur Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche* (Berlin: Alexander Düncker, 1907) 67; similarly Goppelt, ibid., and Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak.*

[56] So Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, 95.

Second Clement may be earlier than Justin's *Apology,* perhaps by a quarter century.[57] It makes mention of a reader among the congregation (τὸν ἀναγινώσκοντα ἐν ὑμῖν [19.1]).[58] The same passage in *2 Clement* shows that sermons were often written for reading because *2 Clement* is a homily based upon Isa 54:1.[59] It is worth noting that the Isaiah text is explicated in terms of the Gentile church,[60] which indicates the importance of the OT for the preaching of the non-Jewish church in the second century, at least in some areas. Similarly, Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 4.23.11) says that Clement of Rome's *Letter to the Corinthians* was read in Christian assemblies of the same period as that of Justin.[61] This took place at Corinth. Indeed Dionysius, writing to Soter, bishop of Rome, also mentions, aside from Clement, the reading of a more recent letter from Rome:

> Today we celebrated the holy Lord's day and we read your letter which we shall have always to be admonished by when we read it from time to time as also we read the former letter written by Clement.[62]

Ferguson places Dionysius's letter at circa 170. The *Letter to the Corinthians* dates from circa 96, some seventy-four years earlier; such letters were cherished and read for a long time by the congregations which received them and perhaps by other churches which had copies.

Goppelt states that the reading of letters or of prophetical revelations such as the Apocalypse to the churches is to be distinguished from liturgical readings: the former, he says, took the place of the sermon.[63] If this is so, their reading occupied a different place from that of the public readings in the synagogue since the letters are different by genre and

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[57] Cf. Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 225. Snyder points out that nothing is known of the homily's provenance, date, or author. From the 4th century it was associated with *1 Clem.*, and Snyder states that this connection might support a Roman origin. That would bring it into a closer relationship with the information provided by Justin. Graydon F. Snyder, "Clement of Rome," in *EEC*, 217.

[58] Text in *The Apostolic Fathers*, vol. 1 (trans. Kirsopp Lake; London: Heinemann; NY: Macmillan, 1912). Clement uses the vocabulary τὰ βίβλια καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι (14.2) for the OT and authoritative Christian books, including the Gospels: so Glaue, *Die Vorlesung heiliger Schriften in Gottesdiensten*, 67 n. 92.

[59] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 214–15.

[60] Snyder, "Clement of Rome," 217.

[61] Wartelle, *Saint Justin Apologies*, 297.

[62] Reproduced from Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, 87.

[63] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 214.

until canonization lacked the same authority. It seems to me that this is a significant observation.

E. *Conclusion*

To sum up, the earliest Christian writings were read as personal letters in the house churches to which they were sent or which possessed copies of such letters. We must speak here first of Paul's letters, which date from as early as the beginning of the beginning of the fifties of the first century. He himself insists that such letters be read out loud to the church. These communications did not take the place of what came to be called by Christians "the Old Testament," which for another hundred years could be referred to by the simple designations [ἡ] γραφή "the scripture" (2 Tim 3:16) or τὰ βίβλια, literally "the books" (*2 Clem.* 14:2). It is true that "[t]he redemptive work of God was made present and effective through the preaching and in the reading of scripture,"[64] but in the early period this redemptive work was surely rooted in pastoral concerns which were dealt with much as someone would write a letter home to a household to address various issues. Two or three decades later the genre of the written Gospel emerged to replace the oral recitation of the acts of Jesus.

The public reading of sacred texts in the church has its background in the synagogue (though such reading was known in the wider world too). The phenomenon of "having" sacred texts was thus well known from the very beginning of the church and prepared the way for the church's eventual deliberations over what became its own canonical collection. By the time of Justin, the reading of the Gospels can be placed alongside the reading of τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν προφητῶν, "the writings of the prophets,"that is, the OT: Justin says they read one or the other; thus one was regarded of the same importance, the same authority as the other.

The first individuals to read Paul's letters publicly in the church were likely those who had delivered them. In such instances the reader could also to some extent explain the contents and, in areas where Greek was not well known, offer or have offered a translation or summary in the local tongue. Even in larger centers such as Ephesus, the number of people who *could* read was, it appears, far from the majority in the groups which gathered as believers; therefore, the reader occupied an

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[64] Goppelt, *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, 215.

important place. Perhaps it was the head of the household in which the church met who read, or someone designated by him or her. Where such writings as a congregation might have had were kept in the early period we do not know, though since the synagogue kept the Scriptures in the ark—that is, a definite place for the storage of sacred things—and since Roman houses had a *lararium*, perhaps it was in such a wooden chest or special place where the Scriptures (OT) and Christian writings were kept.

At the end of the second or beginning of the third century in Rome, the reader is appointed by the bishop, according to Hippolytus, but is not ordained. By the end of the fourth century, the *Apostolic Constitutions* provide for an ordination of the reader, whose role is eventually absorbed by the deacons. But these developments take us beyond the scope of this study, which has had as its *terminus ad quem* Justin's remarks about public reading in the church at Rome in the mid-second century.[65]

[65] For the developments mentioned in this paragraph, see Ferguson, "Reader," *EEC*, 776–77.

THE PAPIAS FRAGMENTS ON MARK AND MATTHEW AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO LUKE'S PROLOGUE: AN ESSAY ON THE PRE-HISTORY OF THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM

Denis Farkasfalvy

Papias is our earliest known author who tells us explicitly of two gospels coexisting in the Church, Matthew and Mark. The fragments of Papias which have survived do not speak of the parallel or combined use of these two gospels but reveal the problem caused by the plurality of the gospels as it was perceived at the beginning of the second century. The thesis of this article is threefold. First, it intends to show that Papias transmits information coming from a significantly earlier source. Second, it demonstrates that this source, when speaking of Mark, is reflecting views closely similar to those contained in the prologue of Luke. Third, it demonstrates that, in the fragments of Papias, Mark is judged by the same criteria which Luke held and that these reflect a gospel model developed in the early church under the influence of Matthew's gospel. The importance of this investigation consists in unveiling the thought pattern which brought together the Synoptic Gospels into one single gospel canon.[1]

A. *The Provenance and Purpose of Papias's Fragment on Mark*

Even specialists make the mistake of referring to Papias's fragment on Mark as if this text had been composed by Papias himself and, therefore, expresses views originating with him. Hence it is often said that Papias has been *critical* of Mark's gospel.[2] Quite the contrary is true. A closer

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[1] I do not want to touch the question of Papias's knowledge and use of John's gospel, which I hold for probable. But, of course, the conclusions reached here are of special relevance for the formation of the four-gospel canon.

[2] Two examples may suffice. Martin Hengel lists the items of "Papias's criticism of Mark" (*Studies in the Gospel of Mark* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985] 49); Tjitze Baarda speaks of Tatian's seeking "to avoid Papias's criticism of Mark's arrangement" ("Diaphónia-Symphónia," in *Gospel Traditions in the Second Century* [ed. W. Petersen; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1989] 150).

look at the famous text shows that what Papias presents is a quotation from a more ancient source. Moreover, it appears that both Papias and his source have been defensive, rather than critical, of the gospel of Mark. According to Papias:

> And this is what the Presbyter used to say: Mark became Peter's interpreter and wrote down accurately whatever he remembered, but not in order, of the things said or done by the Lord. For he had neither heard the Lord nor had he followed him, but later on, as I said, [followed] Peter who used to offer the teachings in anecdotal form,[3] but not making, as it were, a systematic arrangement of the narratives about the Lord; so that Mark made no mistake as he wrote down each item just as he remembered them. For to one thing has he paid attention: to leave out nothing of what he had heard and to falsify nothing in them.[4]

At the beginning of the fragment, a "presbyter" is referred to; he is not Papias but an unnamed source quoted repeatedly in the Papias fragments. Eusebius's introductory sentence makes this sufficiently clear when he states: "We hold it necessary to attach the tradition (παράδοσιν) which he (Papias) expressed about Mark's gospel in what follows (διὰ τούτων)." Thus the rest of his text, quoted above, comes from Papias's source. In the text presented above, Eusebius *quotes* Papias *quoting* the Presbyter.

Remarkable is the large number of negations which this short paragraph contains. The Presbyter makes the following negative assertions:

(1) Mark has *not* put down in order what the Lord said and did (*οὐ* μέντοι τάξει).

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[3] An alternative translation would be "as need arose."

[4] Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.15. The Greek text has the following wording: καὶ τοῦθ' ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἔλεγεν· Μάρκος μὲν ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου γενόμενος, ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν, ἀκριβῶς ἔγραψεν, οὐ μέντοι τάξει τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα. οὔτε γὰρ ἤκουσεν τοῦ κυρίου οὔτε παρηκολούθησεν αὐτῷ, ὕστερον δέ, ὡς ἔφην, Πέτρῳ· ὃς πρὸς τὰς χρείας ἐποεῖτο τὰς διδασκαλίας, ἀλλ' οὐχ ὥσπερ σύνταξιν τῶν κυριακῶν ποιούμενος λογίων, ὥστε οὐδὲν ἥμαρτεν Μάρκος οὕτως ἔνια γράψας ὡς ἀπεμνημόνευσεν. ἑνὸς γὰρ ἐποιήσατο πρόνοιαν, τοῦ μηδὲν ὧν ἤκουσεν παραλιπεῖν ἢ ψεύσασθαί τι ἐν αὐτοῖς.

The translation presented here closely follows the one given by C. Clifton Black, *Mark: Images of an Apostolic Interpreter* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1994). However, for σύνταξιν τῶν κυριακῶν ποιούμενος λογίων, I agree with the interpretation of J. Kürzinger, who attributes a quasi-technical meaning to the expression τῶν κυριακῶν λογίων ("Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis zur literarischen Form des Markusevangeliums," in *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* [Regensburg: Pustet, 1983]).

(2) Mark has *not* heard the Lord (*οὔτε γὰρ ἤκουσεν*).

(3) Mark has *not* followed the Lord (*οὔτε παρηκολούθησεν*).

(4) Mark made *no* orderly arrangement of the accounts about the Lord (*οὐχ ὥσπερ σύνταξιν τῶν κυριακῶν ποιούμενος λογίων*).

(5) Mark made *no* mistake when remembering Peter's preaching (*οὐδὲν ἥμαρτεν*).

(6) Mark left out *nothing* of what he heard from Peter (*μηδὲν ὧν ἤκουσεν*).

(7) Mark falsified *nothing* (*ἢ ψεύσασθαί τι*).

Reconstructing the opposites of each of these seven statements may help us reconstruct a wider context of ideas to which they belong.

The opposite of the *first* negation would mean that Mark has arranged the Lord's sayings in some order. Similar to this is the opposite of the *fourth* negation, which would also deny that Mark created a well-ordered literary composition.[5] The opposite of the *second* negation would state that Mark had witnessed in person the Lord's words and deeds. The opposite of the *third* negation would state that Mark was a disciple of the earthly Jesus.

In these four items, the Presbyter *agrees* with some *negative* (thus critical) *characterizations* of Mark's gospel. The Presbyter seems to admit here certain limitations or deficiencies of the work which his contemporaries pointed out and which he was in no position to deny.

The last three negations are meant to be made in favor of the evangelist Mark. In these the Presbyter denies actual or potential accusations. He points out that, in spite of its admitted shortcomings, Mark's work can be trusted. In three statements he denies that Mark has either (1) distorted or (2) left out or (3) falsified anything that he had learned about Jesus through Peter, a prominent eyewitness. These last three denials, in fact, neutralize the deficiencies admitted in the first four negations. Mark's lack of "order" (both of τάξις and σύνταξις) and his lack of being an eyewitness or a disciple are balanced by these statements about his strict adherence to the accounts of Peter, who himself had been present throughout Jesus' ministry.

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[5] One would think that this context favors Kürzinger's interpretation, accepted also by C. C. Black, as he recognizes the "anecdotal character" of Mark's narratives (cf. the meaning of the phrase πρὸς τὰς χρείας ἐποιεῖτο τὰς διδασκαλίας). In that case, Papias's fragment is the most ancient Christian comment made about the literary genre of a gospel, noting its mosaic-like, pericopal structure, and explaining it from the oral delivery of the Jesus tradition by its first preachers.

It appears that the Presbyter stands in a dialogue with some of Mark's critics. In response to them, he admits important charges, but by pointing to Mark's relationship with Peter, manages to show that these do not reduce the gospel's reliability.[6]

In the course of this dialogue, the Presbyter not only reveals that he agrees with some of the views of Mark's critic(s), but also shows that he shares some of the *presuppositions* which those views imply. These can be summarized in the following points:

(1) Ideally, the author of a gospel is expected to be an *eyewitness*. The Presbyter shows that he accepts this presupposition when he admits that the author of Mark's gospel was not an eyewitness. Operating under the same presupposition, he establishes the credibility of Mark's text by stating that it faithfully reports the testimony of the most important eyewitness of the Lord's words and deeds.

(2) The accounts should be *orderly and organized* (with τάξις and σύνταξις). By admitting that Mark's work lacks order, the Presbyter shows that he *shares* the critics' basic view: it would, indeed, be desirable that the accounts presented by Mark satisfy some compositional rules, which their author, however, seems to have neglected.

(3) The work must be endowed with some measure of *completeness*. When the Presbyter claims that Mark did not leave out anything told by his eyewitness source, he takes up a position that appears to be defensive. It is best understood as a response to the charge that Mark's gospel is incomplete, a charge which is hard to deny, given the nature of Mark's gospel. The Presbyter's response does not challenge this expectation; it admits that completeness is legitimately demanded from the work. But he defends Mark by stating that whatever he heard—whatever he knew from his eyewitness source—he has put into writing.

(4) Reporting must be *accurate*, admitting no falsification. Here again the denial of falsification and the accuracy with which Mark reports Peter's preaching appear to be of an apologetic character. We must, however, notice again that the Presbyter and his assumed

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[6] It is quite possible that the Presbyter's reply to the charges against Mark takes advantage of a feature in which Mark's gospel differs from those of Matthew and of Luke, for this reference to Peter as Mark's (only) eyewitness would well explain why this gospel contains no narratives about Jesus' childhood and has nothing beyond what could have been witnessed by Peter. Only in Mark's gospel is Peter's call found close to the beginning of the book (Mark 1:16–17). Thus what the Presbyter says about Mark's gospel is a defense that could be applied with much more difficulty to Matthew or Luke, in whose works several chapters precede the call of Peter.

interlocutors agree that accuracy in reproducing the oral apostolic preaching is a requirement that must be maintained when examining a written source about the sayings and deeds of Jesus.

From among these four presupposed requirements the second is such that, when applied to Mark's work, the Presbyter is unable to offer a thorough defense. He agrees that there is no sufficient order in the work. Yet he manages to defend the evangelist in a roundabout way, for he claims that Mark's deficiency comes from the very same source which highly guarantees the work's trustworthiness: the lack of order was caused by Mark's strict adherence to his eyewitness source. In this way, the Presbyter manages to turn an apparent deficiency into a sign of authenticity: the lack of a compositional structure in the text comes from the very fact that the evangelist faithfully followed an oral preaching style which had to be anecdotal.

From this analysis the following conclusions can be drawn:

(a) The views reported by Papias around AD 110–30 reflect those of another person, an ancient "presbyter" who *belongs to the previous generation.* The views quoted by Papias were part of a tradition already formed by the time they came to be written down by him.

(b) Yet the Presbyter himself is *responding to objections previously raised.* The matters he treats—the statements he denies—must have been made in earlier times, at least as early as (and possibly earlier than) the turn of the century.

(c) The *ideas about which the Presbyter and his opponent(s)* (the critics of Mark) agree must have been items generally accepted in the Christian communities of Asia Minor (Papias's home base). Thus the statements which we identified as common ground between the Presbyter and his interlocutors must be understood[7] as views commonly embraced by wider groups of Christian believers in the last decades of the first century.

(d) The Presbyter negotiates the defense of Mark's work by keeping in focus the requirement of eyewitness sources. He never fully abandons this requirement; he only compromises in the way it could be satisfied: he thinks that it can be satisfied by assuring that not the author himself but his source of information has been an eyewitness.

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[7] One might take this "must be understood" as nothing but a conjecture. Yet the similarity we will show between this "common ground" and the ideas of Luke in his Prologue confirm our presupposition.

(e) The reply that the Presbyter provides leaves some ambiguity. He manages to show that two of the requirements to which he and his opponent(s) subscribe may be, actually, in conflict: he has just demonstrated how Mark's close adherence to Peter's preaching caused his accounts to be a less than perfect literary product. On the one hand, Mark follows the best possible eyewitness source; on the other hand, exactly because of his close adherence to his source, his composition lacks the "order" one expects from such a work.[8]

B. *The Defense of Mark by the Presbyter and the Lukan Prologue*

Luke's famous Prologue (Luke 1:1–4) provides excellent historical background to the interchange between the Presbyter and his opponent(s) criticizing Mark.

Luke says that many (πολλοί) have tried to put together an orderly narrative (ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν) about the events that have come to completion "among us." Their aim was to report the tradition received from "the original eyewitnesses" (οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται) and those who became "ministers of the word" (ὑπηρέται γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου). Now Luke himself, too, wants to fulfill this task by carrying out the following agenda:

(1) Investigating[9] all matters from the beginning (παρηκολουθηκότι ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν) with exactness (ἀκριβῶς)

(2) Writing an ordered—"systematic"[10]—account (καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι) of the results of his investigation

(3) Offering his reader, in this way, solid certainty about the reliability of the teaching already received (περὶ ὧν κατηχήθης λόγων τὴν ἀσφάλειαν)

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[8] Papias might have been quite aware of this contradiction, and this may be the reason he preferred to written sources the "living and abiding voice" of the oral tradition.

[9] A large number of authors rightly insist that παρηκολουθηκότι has the meaning "tracing back, investigating" (Dupont, Haenchen, Grundmann, Lagrange, Rengstorf, Zerwick, with whom J. Fitzmyer agrees (*The Gospel according to Luke, I–IX* [AB; Garden City: Doubleday, 1981] 297). Decisive is the adverb ἀκριβῶς, for which it is difficult to justify any other proposed translation ("follow," "keep in close contact").

[10] The meaning of καθεξῆς is disputed, but its importance is negligible. Those who translate it as "with no gap" connect it with the idea of completeness expressed before by the word πᾶσιν, while others see in it the idea of continuity and thus connect it with the expression ἀνατάξασθαι, the latter being taken probably not in a chronological but in a literary sense.

The idea of τάξις appears twice in this text, first in the use of a verb formed of the same root (ἀνατάξασθαι) to describe the ideal embraced by Luke's predecessors, then, a second time, through the use of the word καθεξῆς, expressing Luke's own goal of an ordered narrative.

It seems that the requirement of both using eyewitness sources and offering an ordered account belong to the "common ground" between Luke and the πολλοί who preceded him in the task.

Luke seems to think that he and the πολλοί differ only in their means of achieving this double goal. For his part, Luke proposes an investigation that goes back in time as far as possible and extends itself to all matters (πᾶσιν). At the same time, he intends to produce a text that achieves a sure foundation for ecclesial teaching.[11] He does not say to what extent the "many" (the other authors) succeeded or failed to achieve their goal. However, an obvious implication must be that Luke considered their works in some way deficient, for otherwise he would have had no justification for writing his own book.

A quick comparison of Luke's Prologue with the defense of Mark's gospel by the Presbyter reveals both striking similarities and some important differences. Obviously, the requirement of eyewitness sources as well as the ideal of an ordered account is common ground not only between Luke and the πολλοί but also between the Presbyter and his opponent. Two more characteristics are common between Luke and the Presbyter. Both demand precision (ἀκριβῶς) and speak of including "all things" in the written work (πᾶσιν). The dissimilarities are rooted in the fact that, while the Presbyter can claim for Mark only one eyewitness source (Peter), Luke speaks of them in the plural (αὐτόπται, ὑπηρέται). Consequently, while Mark's source is conceived of as a "given," available right at the beginning of the enterprise, Luke assigns to himself the task of tracking down such sources all the way to the very beginning (ἄνωθεν). This produces a further dissimilarity: for Luke to write a complete report, he must find as many witnesses as possible, all the way back to the first memories about Jesus (οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται), while Mark's account is not expected to include anything more than what his only source, Peter, has witnessed. Thus the requirement of "completeness" means quite different things for the two authors. For Mark it means a written rendition of *all that Peter spoke about* ("not leaving out anything"), while for Luke it means that all the deeds and words of Jesus about which tradition has survived must be

[11] Such translation of λόγοι is preferable. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 301.

included in the book. Luke's use of the term πᾶσιν has been interpreted as "a pardonable exaggeration."[12] It is, however, nothing more than the statement of the goal of completeness which indeed seems to be part of the early ideal of a written gospel. Finally, the term ἀκριβῶς, used by both the Presbyter and Luke, refers to somewhat different concepts. Mark's "precision" is supposed to be that of a spokesman or a translator, while in Luke's text the adverb ἀκριβῶς completes the verb "investigating"; therefore, it seems to mean precision in both tracking down and reproducing the sources.

C. *Matthew's Work in the Context of the Presbyter's Defense of Mark*

Besides the book of Mark, Papias knew of another work which contained information about Jesus. Isolated from its context, Papias's fragment on Matthew tells little, and even that little is ambiguous. However, if its context is correctly identified, the content of the fragment becomes significantly enriched.

Immediately after reproducing Papias's quotation from the Presbyter on Mark, Eusebius presents a Papias fragment on the Gospel of Matthew.[13] That this Matthew is one of the Twelve is reasonably assured. From another fragment we know that Papias counted Matthew among the Lord's disciples[14] since he enumerates him alongside several others who show up on the synoptic lists of the Twelve. The place of Matthew on the list is right before John. This may be of significance: John is the only other member of the Twelve to whom a gospel is attributed. There is enough reason to believe that the wording of the fragment on Matthew comes from the same Presbyter quoted about Mark: it forms part of the general argument on Mark and must, therefore, not be interpreted in isolation from the text that precedes it.[15]

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[12] J. H. Ropes, quoted by J. Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 297.

[13] Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.31.16.

[14] ἡ Ματθαῖος ἢ τις ἕτερος τῶν τοῦ κυρίου μαθητῶν (*Hist. eccl.* 3.39.4). Matthew is not called an "apostle." However, Papias stands in the Johannine tradition, in which the term "apostle" is never used for referring to the disciples of Jesus.

[15] Before moving on to quote Papias on Matthew, Eusebius inserts a summarizing sentence about the information transmitted about Mark and does not mention again that Papias used the Presbyter as his source. J. Kürzinger regrets this "editing" by Eusebius, for he considers the sentence "eine isolierende Zwischenbemerkung" which leads to the erroneous impression that the fragment is not coming from the Presbyter. Kürzinger is right, as he observes that "the basic line of thought" ("gedankliche Grundlinie") remains

Indeed, this information on Matthew's gospel is brought forward by Papias as an additional argument in defense of the merits of Mark. By quoting the Presbyter, he has just stated that Mark's work is not that of an eyewitness. If we assume that Papias and the Presbyter were addressing a church community aware of the existence of Matthew's gospel, we realize that an explanation was due. For why would the Presbyter, instead of recommending the Gospel of Matthew, provide support for the book of Mark tainted as it was by its admitted deficiencies? The information that Papias gives right away about Matthew is a logical next step. It answers a question that many an exegete would ask even in our days: if we have Matthew, why do we need Mark? In the context of the Presbyter's church community, the question is even more crucial: if one has Matthew, *an orderly composition written by an eyewitness,* why bother reading Mark's gospel, which lacks order and is a secondhand narrative?

Originally, the fragment replies, Matthew's work was written in a Semitic language (Hebrew or Aramaic); thus for the Greek-speaking Christians it is accessible only in translation. This implies, of course, that the available Greek text of Matthew lacks originality: it is a secondhand rendition with no guarantee of exactness. Due to the *various* efforts of translation, there is a plurality of textual witnesses, each claiming to be of Matthew and to be exact. Matthew's Greek text is not the original one, and the plurality of translations is a clear sign that they are only approximately exact.

The vast majority of present-day scholars think that Papias was mistaken about the Greek text of Matthew. This may well be so. But one must add a note. He was certainly not mistaken about the beliefs of his contemporaries about the plurality of these books, all claiming to be Matthean in origin and representing a translation of the original text. Even if there was never an Aramaic Matthew, the *claim* of being a translation of such a work has surely been attached to a variety of gospels used in the church communities of the early second century. We know about several early apocryphal gospels, with titles such as "according to the Hebrews," or the "Egyptians," or the "Nazareans," of

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the same, and, therefore, one must deal also with the fragment about Matthew as a text explaining the literary characteristics of Mark. Kürzinger argues: "Auf was bezieht sich das Interesse der Gesamtaussage? Dies festzustellen, dürfte nicht schwer sein. Denn offenkundig blickt Papias in erster Linie, ja eigentlich ausschließlich, auf die literarische Art des Mk. Ev." (J. Kürzinger, "Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis," 11).

which some were attributed to Matthew, regardless of the fact that they carried no significant resemblance to the canonical gospel named after the apostle.

A fragment by Clement of Alexandria, which I studied in detail elsewhere, can shed further light on the matter.[16] This somewhat mystifying (and often misunderstood) text quotes an ancient Presbyter who stated that the "gospels with genealogies" are earlier than those "without genealogies." As I have shown, Clement's Presbyter is not providing a means for determining the chronology of the four canonical gospels. At the time of the Presbyter in question, there could not have been a four-gospel canon. Therefore, "gospels" in this text cannot signify those four books. Rather, this Presbyter speaks of various (and possibly competing) versions of Matthew (and probably also of Luke) which, circulating with equal claims of authority, caused confusion. The Presbyter quoted by Clement is, therefore, saying that the versions of the gospels which contain infancy narratives are earlier than those without infancy narratives. This statement was then used as a rule of thumb for recognizing and discarding heretical editions of the gospels of Matthew (and of Luke), among them the gospel of the Marcionite canon, which notoriously lacked the infancy narratives.[17]

It seems, therefore, that the presbyters quoted by Clement and Papias address issues that are closely akin. They provide multiple attestation to an issue confusing the Church at the beginning of the second century. An emerging plurality of written records of the Jesus tradition, including several textual forms claiming Matthean origin ("gospel of Matthew"), prompted church leaders to look for the criteria by which to sort out authentic and non-authentic works.

D. *The Matthean Gospel Model Presupposed by Both Luke's Prologue and Papias's Presbyter*

We saw that the Papias fragment on Mark is linked with the Lukan Prologue by a common background of ideas and suppositions. Here I

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[16] D. Farkasfalvy, "The Presbyter's Witness on the Order of the Gospels as Reported by Clement of Alexandria," *CBQ* 54 (1992) 887–92.

[17] So was, according to Epiphanius, also the Gospel of the Ebionites a shortened version of Matthew: παρακόψαντες γὰρ τὰς παρὰ τῷ Ματθαίῳ γενεαλογίας. The full text is quoted in Aland's *Synopsis* in note to Matt 3:1–6.

intend to investigate the role Matthew's gospel might have played in establishing this linkage.

Scholarship is notoriously divided over the question whether the author of the gospel of Luke knew Matthew's work. The relationship of Matthew and Mark is also still in question. While virtually all authors claim that either Matthew depends on Mark or Mark depends on Matthew, there is no agreement about which was first. Nor can the present considerations decide the question. However, we might take a step towards better explaining why and how the early church developed the view that both Mark and Luke wrote their gospels with a knowledge of Matthew.

In his Prologue, the Lukan author clearly assumes that "the right kind" of account about Jesus' words and deeds must be written on the basis of eyewitness reports. This requirement cannot be treated as something "natural" or "of common sense." A known parallel to Luke's gospel, the Prologue to *The Jewish Antiquities* by Flavius Josephus, bases its own credibility on historical documents, that is, not on eyewitnesses, but on written sources.[18] In the same work, Josephus promises to demonstrate his statements by quoting historians and their writings—again not eyewitnesses. He refers to "the writings of Phoenicians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, in addition to citing as witnesses many Greek historians" (2.1). Both Luke and the Presbyter defending Mark could have made their case in a similar way, by referring to written sources, for they both knew that written compositions about Jesus existed. Nonetheless, neither does Luke try to convince his readers—as most of his modern commentators do—that his use of written sources should establish his work's credibility, nor does the Presbyter say that Mark used the composition of Matthew. Rather, both Luke and the Presbyter insist on the use of eyewitness sources because the *genre of a gospel* as they knew it demanded that this fact be emphasized.[19]

We are, therefore, entitled to conclude that both Luke and the Presbyter operate with an already established gospel model to which the following elements clearly belong:

(a) It is based on eyewitness accounts.

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[18] ". . . was written by me in Greek on the basis of our sacred books" (1.1).

[19] The latest canonical gospel, the Gospel of John, follows the same pattern: it is "seeing" that explains the origin of faith. Therefore, the Fourth Gospel's last redactor argues for the work's credibility by referring to an eyewitness, the "beloved disciple."

(b) It contains both deeds and words of Jesus.[20]

(c) It covers all information available.

(d) It is an ordered composition.

The striking similarities between the fragment on Mark and the Prologue of Luke connect the *Presbyter* and the author of Luke's gospel. The two texts come from a period preceding the time of Papias. While there is little or no evidence of a literary dependence between them, the two texts manifest a shared gospel model which they both presuppose in their reasoning. In fact, the Presbyter assumes that his opponent is critical of Mark's gospel because he finds it wanting on the basis of this gospel model.

Furthermore, the gospel model which Luke presupposes in 1:1–4 does not appear to be a particular concept held only by the evangelist, who refers to "many" authors of similar works who, apparently, tried to achieve this same ideal.

Were the Presbyter and Luke acquainted with this model because *they knew the Gospel of Matthew?* What they knew about it, whether or not they actually held it in their hands, or the form in which they knew it, is a separate problem that cannot be resolved here. However, Luke and the Presbyter offer enough evidence to make it probable that they both were working with a common gospel model because of their exposure to the same written gospel held in high esteem in the church which must have been an ordered and complete account, authored by an original disciple.[21]

In addition, the Presbyter tells us that such a work was authored by the apostle Matthew. Chronologically, Luke's Prologue may or may not be significantly older than the sayings quoted by Papias from the Presbyter. In any case, it reflects the same unresolved problem: amidst an emerging plurality of new written gospels, how does one provide a structured composition that relies on eyewitness reports and represents the tradition of Jesus to a reasonably full extent? Not only is Luke's ideal of a gospel close to the one adhered to by Papias's Presbyter; the two seem to face the same question as they confront an emerging plurality of books dealing with the deeds and sayings of Jesus. If, in the

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[20] The Presbyter speaks of τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντας, while Luke, in Acts 1:1, refers to his first volume as a discourse περὶ πάντων, . . . ὧν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν καὶ διδάσκειν.

[21] John's gospel is not complete in the sense that it has no "genealogies" (= infancy narratives).

Presbyter's defense of Mark, the Matthean gospel model is presupposed, it is highly probable that the same model—and thus acquaintance with the same gospel—lies behind the statements of Luke's Prologue.

One may entertain doubts about Luke's use of Matthew's gospel as a source. It is, however, very difficult to call into doubt that Luke's ideal of a gospel as explained in his Prologue is secondary to an original model the church already possessed before his time and which was based on a work attributed to someone who had been a living witness to Jesus' public ministry. Luke's description of what he tries to achieve appears to be secondary to the Matthean model, which certainly existed at the time Luke and the "early presbyters" began to present their understanding of what a gospel must be like. By modifying that model, they began promoting the secondhand accounts of Mark's and Luke's own gospels.

The alternative promoted in synoptic studies is the assumption that in Luke the Markan gospel model is at work and that, in delivering an improved version of this model, Luke uses and transforms the Gospel of Mark. However, we know that a number of crucial elements in Luke's structure and outline cannot be deduced from Mark. The presentation of Jesus' origins in Luke is quite different from Matthew's, but the idea of presenting a genealogy for Jesus belongs to Matthew's outline and not to that of Mark. There are a number of explanations for the absence of resurrection appearances at the end of Mark. But also in this regard Luke follows a model which passes beyond the story of the empty tomb and leads through encounters with the risen Jesus to stating the universal mission of the disciples. In fact, it can be argued that the two-volume Lukan work is a logical expansion of the Matthaean gospel model. Furthermore, the schematic picture that Luke presents about the "πολλοί" who "attempted to write an account of Jesus' words and deeds" is quite similar to Papias's description of the proliferation of efforts aimed at making Matthew's gospel accessible for Hellenistic readers: each person was doing the best he could (ὡς ἦν δύνατος ἕκαστος). Of course, the two statements are not identical. Papias mistakenly reports that these various gospels are reworkings of one single common source, while Luke correctly speaks of many parallel efforts. Nevertheless, both Luke and the Presbyter seem to work with the same ideal model—what the written report on Jesus' deeds and words should be—and that model appears to be derived from the Gospel of Matthew.

E. *Conclusions*

In the analyses presented above we have seen an interdependent tradition derived from a historical context in which Mark was defended against its critics and Luke explained against a background of works similar to his why and how his work was to be written. In this perspective, the primacy of Matthew's gospel in the early church does not mean first and foremost the use of Matthew's text as a source by Mark and/or Luke, but the priority and originality of the model it represents, in comparison to which the other gospels represent a secondary response. Of course, one rightly suspects that not only in the case of Luke but also in the case of Mark a shift in the gospel model had to take place when it became clear that Matthew's book was either unavailable or inaccessible or simply did not correspond to some or most expectations of the church community and thus a new work had to be commissioned.

From the point of view of the gospel canon, the results of this study may also be significant. In reference to various gospels, "canonizing" might not have meant the same thing. In view of the earliest traditions connected with Matthew's gospel, there is little evidence that the first gospel was ever canonized by a conscious decision. Our present Greek text of Matthew became canonical due to a recognition that *this text authentically* contained the gospel of Matthew in whatever way it came about. But the decision was made on the basis of the notion that what the apostle Matthew authored was an authentic and normative deposit of the Jesus tradition. On the other hand, acceptance of Mark or Luke meant recognition that the secondhand report that they present of Jesus is firmly and credibly based on eyewitness sources. Consequently, the church can, even must, honor them with the same respect that is due to Matthew.

It may be important to add a concluding note as a caution about the content of this essay. At no point did I intend to support a specific synoptic source theory or speculate about the literary dependencies connecting the canonical gospels. The *question treated here has been the earliest perception* the church had about the first three canonical gospels. It was in such a perspective that we found Matthew possessing true priority and Mark and Luke being validated according to criteria developed on the basis of Matthew's gospel. What we find in Luke's Prologue and the testimony of Papias's Presbyter indicates a gospel which cannot be fully understood unless one supposes the existence and reception of Matthew's work. That model was used and somewhat

modified in order to demonstrate that Mark fulfills an important role in the church and that the work that follows Luke's Prologue corresponds to the expectations of church communities with regard to the accounts of Jesus' words and deeds. The historical process identified here has not been given a detailed explanation.

The most important questions that we should consider unresolved are the following:

(1) For what specific reasons did the work of Matthew begin to appear as insufficient for satisfying (alone) the needs of the church? For, according to Papias's Presbyter, the Gospel of Mark was supposed to fill a vacuum created as uncertainties began to surround the various Greek texts, all claiming to be based on the work of Matthew.

(2) How was the "myth" born that none of the available Greek texts of Matthew represented an original work and caused the perception that new works reporting eyewitness testimony were needed?

(3) Can we conclude that the works of the πολλοί referred to by Luke's Prologue as well as the various translations of Matthew mentioned by the Presbyter reflect the gospel genre already formed? In this case, can it be said that this genre was formed by analogy to the Gospel of Matthew as perceived by the early churches?

In any case, we have plenty of reasons to conclude that both Mark and Luke have obtained canonical status by being compared to Matthew, while the Greek text of Matthew found its acceptance as a text which authentically transmits the original composition of the apostle Matthew. Thus the three synoptics are a structured "triplet": Matthew is the "primum analogatum," while the other two are grouped with it by reason of their similarity.

FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL CANON

William R. Farmer

In order to understand the history and importance of the fourfold gospel canon, one needs to see its creation within the context of the history of the formation of the NT canon as a whole. A convenient survey of this development is given in *The Formation of the New Testament Canon.*[1] This survey shows that the fourfold gospel canon was created to meet certain needs of the church in the mid-second century.

The canonical gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were all composed at an earlier period, namely during the second half of the first century. The latest of the four, the Gospel according to John, was probably composed around AD 90, about the same time that an effort was being made in the same part of the world to collect and publish a corpus of Paul's letters. A Christian reformer also from Asia Minor named Marcion took this Pauline collection and edited it for his own purposes. He did likewise with the Gospel of Luke. Marcion's reforms functioned to separate the Christian church from its scriptural roots in Judaism.

Marcion's gospel and his edited form of the Pauline corpus provided his church with an attractive, streamlined, and updated scriptural basis for its mission. Although Marcion's reforms were rejected by the church at large and specifically by the elders of the church in Rome where Marcion had made a bid to gain influence, Marcionite churches grew in number and flourished long after his death. Thus, the popularity of Marcion's gospel, for which Marcion made special claims of reliability, was one of the factors that eventually influenced the church in deciding which of the existing gospels would be authorized for use by the faithful.

The process of deciding which gospels were to be included in the church's fourfold gospel canon was not, as some would suggest, the result of some well-thought-out plan made by a centralized ecclesiastical authority. We may take the case of the *Gospel of Peter* as an example of how the selective process actually worked. This relatively short gospel

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[1] William R. Farmer and Denis Farkasfalvy, *The Formation of the New Testament Canon: An Ecumenical Approach* (New York: Paulist, 1983).

was being used in some churches in Asia Minor when, late in the second century, a bishop named Serapion got wind of its troublesome character and took steps to inform the churches which were using it that not everything in it was in accordance with the "true teaching of the Savior" (Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.12.3–6). The standard by which "true teaching" was established of course, was that set by gospels that were known to have been "handed down" from the period of the apostles. It is thus clear that an increasingly important factor leading to the formation of the fourfold gospel canon was the ever increasing number of new gospels. The adherents of these new gospels could always claim that their gospels were better suited than others to serve particular interests of certain Christian communities. In the case of the *Gospel of Peter*, Bishop Serapion identified its authors as "docetae," that is, Christians who were charged with claiming that Jesus only "seemed" to do some of the things to which the earlier gospels witnessed. For example, Jesus as he hung on the cross "felt no pain" according to the *Gospel of Peter*. Thus though he may have seemed to suffer by crucifixion, he did not suffer as we would have suffered in his place, and his suffering and death would consequently have had no redeeming effect.

In ways such as this, bishops, who in their leadership roles were in an ecclesial and thus a financial position to provide churches reliable copies of those gospels that had been handed down, were able to assist the faithful in culling out later gospels that departed from the "true teaching of the Savior" that had been handed down from the time of the apostles, that is, that formative sixty-odd-year period of time following the death and resurrection of Jesus until the last of the church's four gospels and some of the later letters were written. It should be noted that, in the case of the *Gospel of Peter*, what was decisive was not whether its composition was attributed to an apostle, but whether what it taught was in accord with the "true teaching of the Savior." Since the *Gospel of Peter* was not in accord with this teaching, it could not be accepted and used as an authentic work of someone sent by the Savior, no matter that the name of someone sent by the Savior was attached to it.

Which were the gospels that had been faithfully handed down from the time of the apostles? For an answer to this question we turn to the school of Justin Martyr and to the work of his student Tatian, who combined the texts of the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, into the text of a single gospel. This came to be known as Tatian's Diatessaron because it was one gospel through four.

Justin's school flourished in Rome in the period just following Marcion's rejection and at the beginning of the great missionary effort to which Marcion devoted the remainder of his life. Marcion maintained that Christianity contradicted Jewish Scriptures; Justin maintained that it fulfilled them. According to Justin, Christians in Rome would gather on Sunday and listen to the reading of the memoirs of the apostles or the writing of the prophets. Justin does not specify the names of the apostles whose "memoirs" were being read in church, but he knows that these texts were composed by "the apostles and those who followed them." This distinction suggests that Justin knew that Mark and Luke were not written by apostles but by disciples of apostles. At one point, however, Justin refers to a statement that is found only in our Gospel according to Mark (3:16–17) and says with reference to this statement that it is recorded in Peter's memoirs (*Dial.* 106.3), indicating that Justin regarded the text we know as the Gospel of Mark as a memoir of the Apostle Peter. There is no reason to doubt that the other texts he referred to as "memoirs of the apostles" were our Gospels according to Matthew, Luke, and John. Justin knows other gospel-like texts concerning Jesus, but he seldom uses them.

The important point is this: at the same time that Marcionites were learning to read a single gospel based on what Marcion believed to be the most original form of the gospel that Paul had read, the churches that followed the lead of Christians in Rome read no single gospel. Justin uses the plural: "Memoirs of the Apostles."

The advantage enjoyed by the Marcionites in having a single gospel that was free of discrepancies and alleged "Judaistic" additions was very real. No doubt the whole problem was discussed in Justin's school in Rome. As has been mentioned, after Justin's martyrdom (ca. 165), one of his students, in Syria, published a single unified gospel which drew together almost all the traditions contained in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The strong preference that was shown in Justin's school and in Tatian's Diatessaron for Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John over all competing gospel texts was, as far as we know, shared in all parts of the church which rejected Marcion and the Gnostics. At one point, however, Marcion made a lasting contribution to the churches that rejected him. As with the Apostle Paul, Marcion emphasized that there was only one gospel. This helps explain why the practice developed of referring to each separate apostolic "memoir" as "The Gospel (singular) according to Matthew (. . . Mark, . . . Luke, and . . . John)." In some such way as

this the "Fourfold Gospel Canon" of the church came into being and has come down to us equipped with this revealing set of separate titles for each of the four books.

If we ask why the church that formulated our biblical canon recognizes only these four gospels, the answer is that these four writings are the only texts coming from "the time of the apostles" that tell the gospel story in a manner that is in accord with what Bishop Serapion and the churches that rejected "docetism" and Marcionism regarded as the "true teaching of the Savior." The church at Rome that rejected Marcion and recognized Justin as a martyr was one of these churches. These gospels functioned to sustain the faith of those martyrs of the church who, like Jesus and the Apostles Peter and Paul, were faithful unto death. Ignatius and Polycarp, who died as martyrs, were spiritually formed by these same gospels; this indicates that churches in Syria and Asia Minor following these Apostolic Fathers, at the beginning of the second century, were disposed to proceed as Bishop Serapion proceeded at the end of the second century, and as would the churches of Gaul in the time of Irenaeus.

To test this conjecture, we return to the case of the *Gospel of Peter*. We should note that this text is largely restricted to an account of the passion of the Savior. Based on the content of the *Gospel of Peter*, it is clear that when Bishop Serapion discovered that there were parts of the gospel that were not in accordance with the "true teaching of the Savior" he was not referring to the "sayings" of Jesus, neither to his teaching in the Sermon on the Mount nor to his parables. Rather he was referring to the Savior's teaching about his passion.

We noted that the *Gospel of Peter* states that as Jesus hung on the cross he felt no pain. Such a statement is not in accord with the "true teaching of the Savior" who, as is clear both from the four canonical gospels and from the letters of Paul,[2] grounded his teaching about his suffering and death in the "gospel" we know from the book of the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah the suffering and death of the Servant Messiah is redemptive (Isaiah 53). In the Gospel according to Matthew, we read that during his final meal with his disciples Jesus "took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for

[2] See esp. 1 Cor 15:1–3; Rom 10:16, citing Isa 53:1; and Rom 15:21, citing Isa 52:15; see also Rom 4:25, echoing Isa 53:4–5; 5:19, echoing Isa 53:11; Gal 1:4, 2:20, echoing Isa 53:8–9; Phil 2:7–8, echoing Isa 53:10–12; 2:9, echoing Isa 53:13.

the forgiveness of sins'" (Matt 26:27–28 || Isa 53:12, "he bore the sins of many"). In his first letter to the church of God at Corinth, the Apostle Paul reminded his brethren of the terms in which he had preached to them *the gospel* (1 Cor 15). Of first importance was that tradition that he had received from those who were apostles before him, "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures." The Scriptures referred to include Isa 52:13–53:12, which begins: "Behold my servant . . ." and ends: "He bore the sins of many and made intercession for the transgressors."

Only Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell this redemptive story of the flesh-and-blood martyrdom of the Son of God. In teaching that Jesus as he hung on the cross "felt no pain," the *Gospel of Peter* makes it clear that Jesus did not experience a flesh-and-blood martyrdom; that is, he did not suffer as we would have suffered; thus his death could not be redemptive for us. The failure of the *Gospel of Thomas* to make any reference to the passion of Jesus is important. None of the gospels left aside and neglected by the church are true to the gospel preached by Paul or those apostles from whom he received the tradition he passes on in 1 Corinthians 15. By definition the rejected gospels introduce new understandings of the term *gospel*, understandings that are not grounded in writings known as Scripture by Jesus or his disciples.

The book known as the Gospel according to Mark opens with the words: "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Here the noun *gospel* is used absolutely as in the letters of Paul. It is significant that the author associates this "gospel" with the book of the prophet Isaiah by immediately proceeding to say: "As it is written in the prophet Isaiah." The text he cites combines texts from other Scriptures besides Isaiah, but it is only Isaiah that he mentions. This is not a careless error on the part of the evangelist. Rather it indicates that Isaiah was normative for his reading of Moses and the Prophets. With Mark, for the first time, the Isaianic term *gospel* becomes associated with a narrative text featuring the life, teaching, and passion of Jesus. From this connection of gospel with a written narrative came the practice of referring to the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as gospels. What is important to note is that according to this understanding of church history the term *gospel* as related to written texts originally was normed by the book of the prophet Isaiah.

As long as these four books lived their separate and independent lives in various parts of the church, each could have been received and handed on as the main authoritative gospel account for its respective

adherents. Under these circumstances it was possible for Christians to favor one gospel over all others or in some cases to combine them. There is some evidence that Justin made use of texts of the sayings of Jesus which were the result of combining the texts of these sayings from parallel texts in the gospels of Matthew and Luke.

The primary effect of bringing these four gospels together into a single fourfold canon was twofold. On one hand, the separate authority of any one of these gospels tended to be restricted by the necessity to take account of the other three. At the same time the authority of these four, by comparison to that of all others, tended to be increased. One could clearly see from reading these four that by comparison all other written accounts, such as the *Gospel of Peter* or the *Gospel of Thomas*, lacked the kind of textual support for their teaching that could be easily adduced for much of the teaching in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Much of the teaching in Matthew or in Mark or in Luke was confirmed by what one could find in one or both of the other two.

The Gospel of John was another matter. But if one could regard John as the "spiritual" gospel, which like an eagle soars above the others, it could be read as enhancing the authority of the other three in comparison with all the newer "gospels" that continued to appear here and there in the church. Like Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and unlike all other gospels, John also told the redemptive story of the flesh-and-blood martyrdom of the Isaianic Son of God as the Davidic Servant-King Messiah. A final advantage of bringing John together with the other three was that it discouraged any tendency for 1 John's gnostic adherents to move further and further in a docetic-gnostic direction. The fourfold gospel canon saved John for the contra-Marcionite, contra-gnostic church of the apostles. Without reading it in relation to the other three, one had no effective way to check or limit the kind of gnostic speculation that served to undermine apostolic faith. Central to the "apostolic discourse" of the church which formed the fourfold gospel canon was the teaching requiring public witnessing (Matt 10:26–28) and the promise that those who are obedient unto death will be saved (vv. 17–22).

With the fourfold gospel canon in hand, the church had an effective jaw bone with which the faithful could keep at bay misdirected Christians who wandered from that "Truth of the Gospel" (Gal 2:5) to which even the pillars of the church in Jerusalem (Gal 2:9) were subject (Gal 2:14) and which found its *kanon* in "the cross of our Lord Jesus

Christ" (Gal 6:14–16).[3] Finally, to read Matthew in the light of John, Mark, and Luke helped the church stay the course set by its leaders in the apostolic period (Gal 2:1–10) and avoid any later temptation to abandon the apostolic mission to the gentiles. Saying "no" to Marcion required a compensating "yes" to the more gentile Gospels of Luke, Mark, and John to balance, supplement, and complement the extremely Jewish character of that Gospel which nonetheless powerfully committed the disciples of Jesus to go and make disciples of all the nations (Matt 28:19–20).

Trust in God's promise to save the nations, set forth in the book of Isaiah, is basic to Christian faith. The good news of the gospel is that God is fulfilling this promise through our faith in Jesus as the Christ. The church as body of Christ is a sign of this gospel. This same church has handed down to readers today the fourfold gospel canon and teaches Christians to honor it with their lives.

[3] See William R. Farmer, "Galatians and the Second-Century Development of the *Regula Fidei*," in *SecCent* 4 (1984) 143–70.

A LATE-ANTIQUE TUNIC FRAGMENT IN ST. LOUIS[1]

Paul Corby Finney

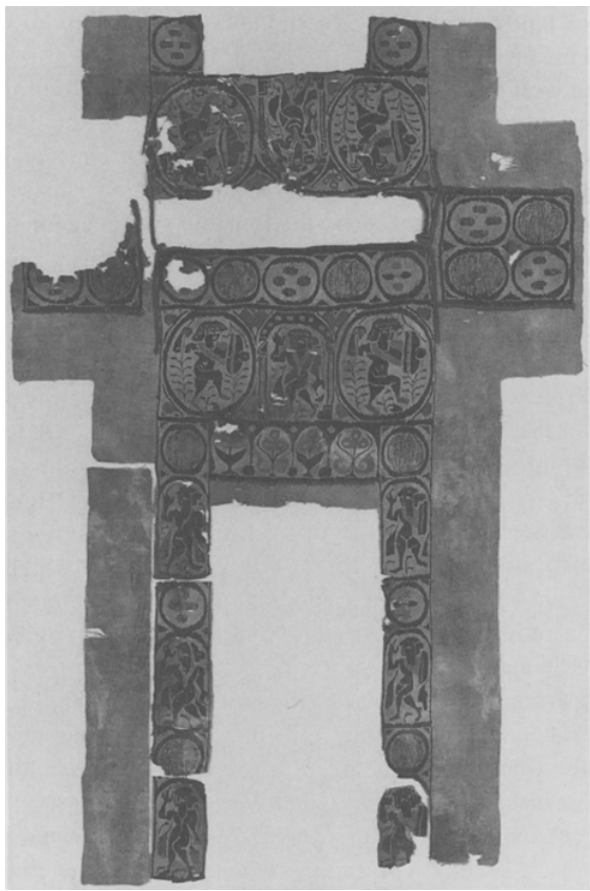

Fig. 1. Tunic fragment, fifth century (?); St. Louis Art Museum (acc. no. 70:1953). Photo courtesy of the St. Louis Art Museum.

[1] For assistance in the preparation of this article, I am very grateful to Zoe Annis Perkins, Textile Conservator in the St. Louis Art Museum.

The fragment (fig. 1) consists in the remains of a tunic front and back. The construction of the fabric involves two distinct weave structures. The ground, or non-decorative, sectors are woven with natural (unbleached) linen yarns using a warp-faced plain weave. The ground warps and wefts are single-ply yarns with an S-twist[2] and an average density per square centimeter of 20 warps and 5.5 weft picks. In those sectors of the garment exhibiting decorative features, the structure changes to a weft-faced tapestry weave executed in woolen yarns dyed to red, gold, green, and purple hues (there has been no dye analysis of these yarns). The woolen weft picks were beaten down, in some cases over paired or triple linen warps, and the creation of pictorial devices made up of woolen wefts over linen warps belongs to the familiar and widely attested late-antique family of slit[3] tapestries, many of them (like the St. Louis example) double-faced, the majority of them Egyptian in provenience. The woolen weft contours are eccentric,[4] or non-horizontal, and for this reason it follows that a measurement of woolen wefts per square centimeter has no diagnostic value.

At its widest dimension, along the line of the neck slit from side to side, the garment measures 72.5 centimeters. Based on this dimension, one can infer that the garment was intended for an adult, not a child. The vertical length of the extant fragment is 109.4 centimeters. However, since there is no evidence of surviving hem lines, this figure too has little diagnostic value. The length from the one surviving side of the original neck slit (which is lined with red cording[5] stitched to the tapestry) to the bottom of the longer side is 79 centimeters; hence it is obvious that the original garment had a minimum overall length exceeding 160 centimeters.

Reading from top to bottom of the more fully-preserved tunic side, the tapestry decoration exhibits the following features. Opposite the neck slit, the linen ground was cut away to make room for shoulder segments, or inserts (epaulettes), that were pieced into the fabric. The epaulettes consist in rectangular frames, each enclosing four roundels (tending toward ovals). The roundels contain paired weft yarns, one green and one gold; the result is a variegated pattern. Similar roundels

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[2] Irene Emery, *The Primary Structure of Fabrics* (Washington, D.C.: Textile Museum, 1996) 11, diagram 1.

[3] On this technique which involves "securing yarns round warp threads," cf. Emery, *Primary Structure*, 89.

[4] Emery, *Primary Structure*, 83, 84, 107; fig. 110.

[5] Emery, *Primary Structure*, 206.

appear within the one surviving narrow neck register (its pendant has been removed); they also function as spacers between the vertically aligned *aediculae* (framing dancers) within the *clavus* registers. Beneath the narrow horizontal neck register with its five roundels is a broad breast register which contains a central *aedicula* (its frame elements consist of plinths supporting columns and an arch) and two lateral roundels. The central feature of this breast register shows a dancer, possibly female, facing left in three-quarter view; the hair is drawn back in a bun; a V-shaped neckband falls over the front upper torso; the right arm is raised, and the left hand is to the side; the legs are crossed in the familiar scissors pattern. The two lateral roundels within the breast register also frame dancers, possibly males, facing right in three-quarter view; their heavy hairpieces fall to the shoulders; both wear baldrics attached to their shield rims; of the latter the most conspicuous feature is the protuberant knop which projects from the center of each shield. The rendering of the legs in these two figures follows the scissors pattern (an iconographic cliché of dancing), although the right leg is raised to a 90-degree angle, as if the two subjects were deliberately prancing. With their right hands, both lateral dancers grasp the stalk of a long leafy plant; the same plant rises at the lower right of the roundel field, beneath the shields, and in the lower center of this same field, between the splayed dancers' legs. The plant is perhaps intended as a giant fennel[6] (*faeniculum*: Pliny *HN* 19.119) with its vaguely awl-shaped leaves and its familiar mythological associations. All six of the extant dancer figures within the two breast registers wear red, ankle-length socks—probably signifying feet that have been soaked in blood or wine, or both. The six surviving vertically aligned *aediculae* within the *clavi* repeat the dancer motif. Finally, beneath the broad chest register is a parallel narrow register, subdivided (resembling a simplified arcade) into four *aediculae* that frame stylized floral devices.

The iconographic hallmarks of the πυρριχιστής (war dancer) are three: the baldric,[7] the shield, and the legs crossed in a scissors pattern. According to Greek tradition,[8] the war dance had roots in the Archaic and Classical periods. The original participants may have been men and boys active in the military, and the dance may have functioned as a

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[6] Franz Olck, "Fenchel," *RE* 6.2 (1909).

[7] The *locus classicus* is the silver baldric (ἐκ δ' ἀργυρεον τελαμῶνα) that Hephaestus fashioned to the rim of Achilles' massive, triple-ply shield; Homer *Il.* 18.480.

[8] Boris Warnecke, "Tanzkunst," *RE* 4.A.2 (1932).

method of consciousness raising, stirring up the troops and preparing them both physically and emotionally for combat. The early ὄρχησις πυρρίχη appears in contexts that sound serious, high-minded, possibly cultic; the dance seems to have been popular among Dorians (notably the Spartiate Equals), but it appears as well in other ethnic contexts.[9]

For the period in which our tunic was woven, namely late antiquity, the terms of the war dance had changed, evidently quite dramatically. During the Hellenistic period women danced the *pyrriche,* and in the popular mind female versions of the dance seem to have been assimilated to aspects of Dionysiac tradition, notably maenadism. Pliny (*NH* 8.5) calls the *pyrriche* "lasciviens." Athenaios (*Deip.* 14.631) suggests that in his time the dance had lost its bloody gravitas, that it was no longer associated with war and killing, that it had become domesticated and "more respectable" (ἐπιεικεστέρα) than it had been among the ancients. For Plutarch (*De sera numinis vindicta* 554B) πυρριχίζειν and ὀρχεῖσθαι were functional equivalents (reiterated in the *Digest* 48.9.8.11). I am not aware that any of the patristic writers ever submitted the *pyrriche* to a form of *interpretatio christiana*; on the other hand, the assimilation to Dionysiac tradition meant that at least in theory this dance was a subject to which Christians might attribute meaning.

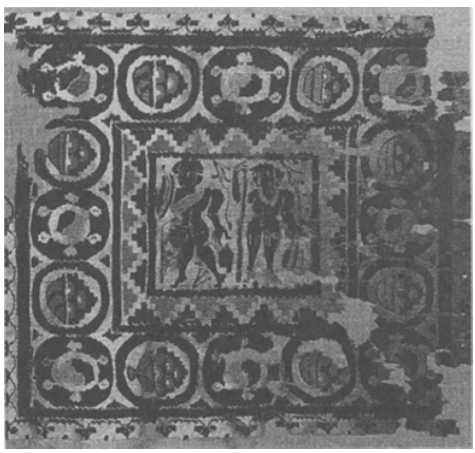

Fig. 2. Slit-tapestry, segment fifth century (?); The Art Institute (acc. no. 1971; 643). Photo courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

[9] Xenophon *Anab.* 6.1.5; Athenaios *Deip.* 1.15.

Dancers on late-antique tapestries from Egypt are a commonplace. Even a cursory search reveals that the St. Louis fragment has multiple parallels, some of them quite close, including three fragments in the collection of the Textile Museum[10] (Washington, D.C.), a fragment in the Stanford Art Museum,[11] another in the Brooklyn Museum,[12] three fragments in the Louvre,[13] one in the Benaki Museum,[14] two in the Kanegafuchi collection,[15] and a fragment in the textile collection of Chicago's Art Institute[16] (fig. 2). With the exception of the Stanford fragment, all of these examples can be attributed to fifth- or sixth-century contexts. Unfortunately, most extant late-antique textiles that are likely to have a bearing on the date of the St. Louis fragment do not come from sealed and dated archaeological contexts (Karanis[17] constituting one of the major exceptions). The chronological court of last appeal, namely style, can be invoked to situate the St. Louis fragment, but only within a rather wide range of *termini* (fourth to sixth centuries), and even at that there is less than certainty.

The St. Louis fragment raises many questions, most of them intractable. We do not know, for example, whether garments of the St. Louis type were executed primarily with the living or the dead in mind, whether they were conceived and designed primarily as festive, decorative wear for the living and then put to their final use as a cadaver wrap, or whether they were conceived from the beginning with mortuary purposes in mind. The manufacture setting is also unknown, the workshop, its internal organization and composition, along with its cultural setting, whether urban or rural, native Egyptian or Demotic or Greek or Coptic. On this latter issue it strikes me there may still be room for discussion and refinement of terminology.

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[10] J. Trilling, *The Roman Heritage* (Washington, D.C., 1982) nos. 44, 45, 46 (close to the St. Louis fragment in style).

[11] S. Lewis, *Early Coptic Textiles* (Stanford, 1966) no. 44.

[12] D. Thompson, *Coptic Textiles in the Brooklyn Museum* (Brooklyn, 1971) no. 20= J. D. Cooney, *Pagan and Christian Egypt* (Brooklyn, 1941) no. 191.

[13] P. du Bourguet, *Musée du Louvre. Catalogue des Étoffes Coptes* I (Paris, 1964) nos. C31–34; see also, M.-H. Rutschowscaya, *Coptic Fabrics* (Paris, 1990) 108-9 (Louvre parallels from the sixth century and later).

[14] L. Marangou, *Coptic Textiles* (Athens, 1971) nos. 15 & 19.

[15] K. Akashi, *Coptic Textiles from the Burying Grounds in Egypt* I (Kyoto, 1958) nos. 20 & 39.

[16] Textile collection unpublished.

[17] L. M. Wilson, *Ancient Textiles from Egypt in the University of Michigan Collection* (Ann Arbor, 1933).

It is clear that the *pyrriche* motif points, at least originally, to a cultural context that is Greek and pagan. It is also clear based solely on the extant textile evidence that dancer figures commanded considerable currency within the late-antique Egyptian decorative arts. For the period of the third through sixth centuries, art historians commonly refer to the pictorial arts in Egypt under the rubric "Coptic"—seemingly intended as an umbrella term, a pan-Egyptian headword. Claudia Nauerth's recent sweeping affirmation of this nomenclature seems to represent the received art-historical opinion: "Man sollte alle Objekte, die aus Ägypten stammen und zeitlich der Spätantike angehören, koptisch nennen."[18] I wonder in what degree this terminology is historically justified. In the case at hand, we have absolutely no knowledge of the ethnic context in which the tunic was manufactured. Under such circumstances, it might be more appropriate to classify this piece (and others like it) under a more neutral heading, such as "late antique."

[18] C. Nauerth, "Mythologische Themen in der koptischen Kunst—neue Bestandsaufnahme 1991/92," *Riggisberger Berichte* 1 (1993) 87–98.

EUSEBIUS AND *THE LITTLE LABYRINTH*

John T. Fitzgerald

Eusebius makes use of a vast number of sources in writing both his *Preparation for the Gospel* (*Praeparatio evangelica*) and his *Ecclesiastical History* (*Historia ecclesiastica*), frequently quoting extensively from numerous works that are no longer extant.[1] The *Preparation for the Gospel* is particularly valuable as a source for ancient philosophy, though it also contains important excerpts from poetic and historical works, both pagan and Jewish.[2] The *Ecclesiastical History* has a similar value for early Christian works.[3] In the beginning of this work, Eusebius refers to Christian authors who "have left to us partial accounts of the times through which they have passed" (*Hist. eccl.* 1.1.3) and indicates that "we have . . . collected from their scattered memoirs all that we think will be useful for the present subject, and have brought together *the utterances of the ancient writers themselves* that are appropriate to it, culling, as it were, the flowers of intellectual fields" (1.1.4).[4] Modern historians are often more grateful for these quotations than for the

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[1] For Eusebius's use of his sources, see esp. B. Gustafsson, "Eusebius's Principles in Handling His Sources, as Found in His Church History, Books I–VII," *StPat* 4 (1961) 429–41. See also the comments of R. M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980) 17–20, 61–72, 76–83, 85–86, 151–62.

[2] The chief fragments preserved by Eusebius in the *Praep. evang.* are conveniently listed by E. H. Gifford in his *Eusebius, Preparation for the Gospel* (2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1903; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981) 1.xxv–xxix. See also the brief discussion by F. J. Foakes-Jackson, *Eusebius Pamphili* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1933) 126–27.

[3] For a brief discussion of Eusebius's sources in the *Hist. eccl.*, see H. W. Attridge and G. Hata, introduction to *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (ed. H. W. Attridge and G. Hata; Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992) 36–37.

[4] Emphasis mine. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* are those of either K. Lake, *Eusebius: Ecclesiastical History* (2 vols.; LCL; London: Heinemann, 1926) or H. J. Lawlor and J. E. L. Oulton, *Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea: The Ecclesiastical History and the Martyrs of Palestine* (2 vols.; London: SPCK, 1927–28).

historical narrative in which Eusebius has embedded them, for they are not only chronologically prior to Eusebius but also constitute primary evidence for a reconstruction of ecclesiastical and imperial history that sometimes differs from that provided by Eusebius.[5] Furthermore, the number of these quotations is not small. According to Lawlor and Oulton, the *Ecclesiastical History* contains "nearly 250 passages transcribed from early sources. Almost half of them—including the greater number of the more lengthy—are otherwise unknown to us."[6]

Three of these quotations are derived from an anonymous document that Eusebius uses in writing book 5, chapter 28, of the *Ecclesiastical History*. This document is typically referred to as *The Little Labyrinth*[7] and is significant for a variety of reasons, including its value as a witness to the "new explosion of interest in Aristotle"[8] that began in the first century BC with Andronicus of Rhodes's edition of the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus[9] and reached a pinnacle with the appointment of Alexander of Aphrodisias to a chair in Aristotelian philosophy between 198 and 209.[10] Among those affected by this Aristotelian

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[5] That Eusebius occasionally rewrote both imperial and ecclesiastical history in order to serve his own theological and personal interests is well known; see, for example, the discussion of R. M. Grant, "The Case against Eusebius, or, Did the Father of Church History Write History?" *StPat* 12 (1975) 413–21.

[6] For a discussion of the quotations in the *Ecclesiastical History*, see Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, 2.19–27. The quotation is from 2.19.

[7] See, for example, J. C. Ayer Jr., *A Source Book for Ancient Church History from the Apostolic Age to the Close of the Conciliar Period* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913) 173; Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, 2.189; J. Stevenson (ed.), *A New Eusebius: Documents Illustrative of the History of the Church to* AD *337* (London: SPCK, 1957) 157 and 403; and W. W. Fortenbaugh, P. M. Huby, R. W. Sharples, and D. Gutas (eds./trans.), *Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for His Life, Writings, Thought and Influence* (Philosophia Antiqua 54.1–2; 2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 1.104–5.

[8] The phrase is that of Richard Sorabji, "The Ancient Commentators on Aristotle," *Aristotle Transformed: The Ancient Commentators and Their Influence* (ed. R. Sorabji; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990) 1.

[9] For the neglect of Aristotle's works prior to Andronicus's edition, see Cicero *Topica* 3 (written in 44 BC). For the ancient tradition of the events that led to Andronicus's edition, see Plutarch *Sulla* 26.1–2, and Strabo, 13.1.54.

[10] For an introduction to this important Aristotelian commentator and his thought, see R. W. Sharples, "Alexander of Aphrodisias: Scholasticism and Innovation," *ANRW* 2.36.2 (1987) 1176–243.

renaissance[11] were some Christians who were active in Rome at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century. They admired both Aristotle and his successor Theophrastus, and they made use of the writings of these philosophers in their own work as theologians (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.14).[12] They may have been influenced in this regard by the physician-philosopher Galen, for whom these Christians had the utmost respect (5.28.14).[13] Galen spent the last thirty years of his life in Rome and was similarly affected by the Aristotelian renaissance. Although he was critical of certain aspects of Aristotle's thought (especially the Stagirite's theory of motion),[14] he was, on the whole, fairly positive toward Peripatetic logic,[15] which is precisely the

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[11] On this Aristotelian renaissance, see esp. P. Moraux, *Der Aristotelismus bei den Griechen: Von Andronikos von Rhodos bis Alexander von Aphrodisias* (2 vols.; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1973–84); F. Wehrli, "Der Peripatos bis zum Beginn der römischen Kaiserzeit," *Ältere Akademie—Aristoteles—Peripatos* (ed. H. Flashar; Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie: Die Philosophie der Antike 3; Basel/Stuttgart: Schwabe, 1983) 459–599; and H. B. Gottschalk, "Aristotelian Philosophy in the Roman World from the Time of Cicero to the End of the Second Century AD," *ANRW* 2.36.2 (1987) 1079–174.

[12] Their activity forms the basis for W. H. C. Frend's statement that "a somewhat pragmatic Aristotelian form of theology may have been developing at Rome" toward the end of the second and the beginning of the third century. See his *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 340. For Aristotelian influence on individuals and groups deemed heretical by the early church, see H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth: A Study in the Relations between Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Early Church* (Bampton Lectures; London: Mowbray, 1954) 226–30, esp. 227–28.

[13] See esp. Hermann Schöne, "Ein Einbruch der antiken Logik und Textkritik in die altchristliche Theologie," *Pisciculi: Studien zur Religion und Kultur des Altertums* (Fs. Franz Joseph Dölger; ed. T. Klauser and A. Rücker; Münster: Aschendorff, 1939) 252–65, esp. 260–62; Richard Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949) 75–86, and Peter Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen in den ersten beiden Jahrhunderten* (2d ed.; WUNT 2.18; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989) 292–93.

[14] Alexander of Aphrodisias refuted Galen's attack on Aristotle. See the edition and translation by N. Rescher and M. Marmura, *Alexander of Aphrodisias: The Refutation of Galen's Treatise of the Theory of Motion* (Islamabad: Islamic Research Institute, 1969).

[15] For Galen's generally positive attitude toward Aristotelian logic, see Gottschalk, "Aristotelian Philosophy in the Roman World," 1169–71. According to Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians*, "Galen's logic and epistemology

philosophical tool that the Christians made use of in their interpretation of Scripture.[16] This use of Aristotle as well as other novel practices and teachings earned these Christian "Galenists" or "Peripatetics"[17] the enmity of *The Little Labyrinth*'s author, who regarded their Christology as not only heretical but also "a recent innovation (νεωτεριοθεῖσαν)" (5.28.2). This rendered the document particularly appropriate for citation by Eusebius, who at the outset of the *Ecclesiastical History* announced his intention to discuss all those heretics who were "driven by the desire of innovation (νεωτεροποιίας) to an extremity of error" (1.1.1).

Inasmuch as *The Little Labyrinth* is an important witness not only to events in the Roman church during a crucial transitional period[18] but also to the effects of pagan intellectual developments on the life of the church, it merits more attention than the passing reference that it typically receives in treatments of ancient church history and theology. The

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are on true Aristotelian lines" (47), and "Galen's main logical work *On Demonstration* is entirely based on Aristotle's *Analytical Posteriora*" (40 n. 3). Galen's usually positive attitude toward Peripatetic logic "is quite in keeping with . . . the generally favourable attitude towards Aristotelian logic to be observed in the Middle Platonism of his time" (Walzer, *Galen on Christians and Jews*, 64).

[16] According to the author of *The Little Labyrinth*, these Roman Christians were particularly interested in "conjunctive" (συνημμένον) and "disjunctive" (διεζευγμένον) syllogisms (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.14). Galen discusses these two types of hypothetical syllogisms in chapter 3 of his *Institutio Logica*, an introductory textbook on logic that is largely devoted to the syllogism; it was, moreover, a late work, possibly written during the 190s, when any personal contact between Galen and this group would have taken place. As Schöne, "Einbruch der antiken Logik und Textkritik," 260, suggests, the *Institutio Logica* is very likely the work that these Roman Christians used.

[17] The designation of these Christians as Peripatetics is an old one; see, for instance, A. E. Burn, *An Introduction to the Creeds* (London: Methuen, 1899) 59, who refers to one of them, Theodotus the Banker, as "a peripatetic philosopher." For a more recent use of this terminology, see H. O. J. Brown, *Heresies: The Image of Christ in the Mirror of Heresy and Orthodoxy from the Apostles to the Present* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984) 97, who calls the Roman adoptionists "analytical Aristotelians."

[18] See the classic discussion of George La Piana, "The Roman Church at the End of the Second Century," *HTR* 18 (1925) 201–77. The essay is reprinted in Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Orthodoxy, Heresy, and Schism in Early Christianity* (SEC 4; New York: Garland, 1993) 1–77.

following discussion is intended as a brief and selective introduction to this document, with emphasis given to its title, author, and date of composition. It is offered in tribute to Everett Ferguson, who was among the first to introduce me to Eusebius,[19] and it is offered in the hope that it will prompt fuller and more adequate investigations of *The Little Labyrinth* and its contents.

A. *The Little Labyrinth*

1. *Title*

There is a curious tension between Eusebius's introduction of the document and his own quotations from it. On the one hand, he refers to the work as a treatise "against the heresy of Artemon" (*Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1).[20] On the other hand, none of his three excerpts mentions this particular heretic by name. The first excerpt pertains to Theodotus the Shoemaker ("the founder and father of this insurrection," 5.28.6), a native of Byzantium who was active when Victor was bishop of Rome (189–99[?]),[21]

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[19] One of the first of Professor Ferguson's many articles was devoted to Eusebius; see his "Eusebius and Ordination," *JEH* 13 (1962) 142–44.

[20] Virtually nothing is known about Artemon, especially his period of activity. He is undoubtedly the same person as the "Artemas" who is mentioned in the letter of the Antiochene Synod of 268. This letter, which is quoted by Eusebius in *Hist. eccl.* 7.30.2–17, condemns Paul of Samosata as someone who "strutted about in the abominable heresy of Artemas" (7.30.16). Eusebius calls attention to the link between the two men in 5.28.1 by asserting that Paul of Samosata tried to renew Artemon's heresy in his own time. Theodoret (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.4 = *PG* 83.389–92) explicitly equates Artemon with Artemas, commenting that some people called Artemon by the name Artemas. In his *Hist. eccl.* 1.4.35 (1.3 in the ANF) he quotes a letter by Alexander the bishop of Alexandria in which the bishop says that the teaching of Arius "is the same as that propagated by Ebion and Artemas, and rivals that of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, who was excommunicated by a council of all the bishops" (trans. Jackson in the ANF).

[21] On Theodotus the Shoemaker, see Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 7.35; 9.3.12; and 10.23 (7.23; 9.7; and 10.19 in the ANF); *Contra Noetum* 3; ps.-Tertullian *Adv. omnes haer.* 23 (8 in the ANF); Philaster *Haer.* 50; Epiphanius *Haer.* 54; Theodoret *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5. For a modern discussion of him, see Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Die Ketzergeschichte des Urchristentums* (Leipzig: Fues's Verlag [R. Riesland], 1884) 610–11.

and the second and third concern Asclepiodotus and Theodotus the Banker,[22] two of the Shoemaker's disciples who were active in the time when Zephyrinus was bishop (199[?]–217) and persuaded a confessor by the name of Natalius to serve for a time as bishop of their church.

This curious circumstance is best explained by reference to a statement made by Theodoret of Cyrus (ca. 393–466) in his *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* (= *A Compendium of Heretical Fables*).[23] After discussing both Artemon (2.4 = *PG* 83.389–92) and Theodotus the Shoemaker (2.5 = *PG* 83.392), Theodoret says, "*The Little Labyrinth* (ὁ σμικρὸς λαβύρινθος) was composed against the heresy of these men" (2.5 = *PG* 83.392A). He then proceeds not only to narrate the same story about Natalius that Eusebius gives in *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8–12 but also to condemn the Theodotians for the same kind of textual alterations that are criticized in *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.13–19. There should be no doubt, therefore, that Theodoret has in mind the same work that Eusebius used; in fact, in *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 (= *PG* 83.392) Theodoret is probably summarizing[24] and sensationalizing Eusebius's account rather than quoting directly from the work since he restricts himself here to the extracts made by Eusebius and does not quote from or summarize other parts of the work. In any case, he certainly sensationalizes his source. For

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[22] On Asclepiodotus, see Theodoret, *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5, who, however, adds nothing beyond what is stated about him by Eusebius. On Theodotus the Banker, see Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 7.36 (7.24 in the ANF; see also 10.24 [10.19 in the ANF]); ps.-Tertullian *Adv. omnes haer.* 24 (8 in the ANF); Epiphanius *Haer.* 54; and Theodoret *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.6.

[23] The work was probably written soon after the Council of Chalcedon (451) in either 452 or 453. For a helpful orientation to this work, see G. M. Cope, "An Analysis of the Heresiological Method of Theodoret of Cyrus in the *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*" (Ph.D. diss., The Catholic University of America, 1990), which includes a translation of all five books. See also S. A. Schade, "A Translation of Portions of Theodoret's *Distinguishing between Lies and Truth*" (M.A.R. thesis, Emmanuel School of Religion, 1988), which contains a translation of *Haer. fab. comp.* 4.12–13 and 5.1–29.

[24] Summarization and condensation are typical of Theodoret's method throughout the work. According to Cope, "The material does not appear to be a fresh study undertaken by Theodoret, but merely a compilation of materials he had used throughout his literary career. . . . The *Compendium* was not written as a florilegium or anthological textbook against the heresies. He cited actual passages from other authors only twice, preferring simply to summarize and condense information on each heresy" ("Analysis," 41, 43).

example, rather than have Natalius paid a salary of 150 denarii a month, as the author of *The Little Labyrinth* says (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.10), Theodoret claims that he received this amount *every day* (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 83.392B)![25] That he is not simply making inferences based on Eusebius's text but does in fact have some independent knowledge of Eusebius's source—either direct or indirect—is indicated by two significant additions that he makes. These are the comments on Artemon in *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.4 (= *PG* 83.389–92) and the statement about the title of the work in 2.5 (= *PG* 83.392).[26] He could not have derived this information from Eusebius's account, so that his insertion of this material appears to reflect some kind of independent knowledge of the work. It is highly likely, therefore, that *The Little Labyrinth* is indeed the title of the treatise quoted by Eusebius, or at least the title by which it was known in Theodoret's time.[27]

2. *Authorship*

As already indicated, Eusebius views the document that he uses in writing book 5, chapter 28, as an anonymous work.[28] It belongs to the

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[25] For an assessment of the purchasing power of 150 denarii per month in the early third century, see Lampe, *Die stadtrömischen Christen*, 292–92.

[26] Theodoret's own personal knowledge of the work is affirmed by G. Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines* (ed. W. Smith and H. Wace; 4 vols.; London: J. Murray, 1877–87; repr. New York: AMS; Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint Co., 1974) 3.85–105, esp. 3.98, and E. Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Philosophisch-historische Abteilung, 1936, Heft 3; Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1936) 50. For a different view, see P. Nautin, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte et de Méliton* (Paris: Cerf, 1953) 119. A mediating position on this issue is taken by R. H. Connolly, "Eusebius *H.E.* v. 28," *JTS* 49 (1948) 73–79, esp. 77–78, who suggests that Theodoret himself has not seen the work but is relying on "some other writer who knew the whole treatise and was able to identify the passages quoted by Eusebius as belonging to it" (78).

[27] Connolly, "Eusebius," 76 and 78, is quite correct in saying that "we cannot conclude with any confidence that our treatise originally bore the title of the *Little Labyrinth*" (78). The treatise is also called *The Little Labyrinth* by Nicephorus Callistus in his *Hist. eccl.* 4.20 (*PG* 145.1029C), but he is dependent for this information upon Theodoret, whom he quotes.

[28] Eusebius makes three references to the author of the work: *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1, 7, 13.

third of three categories of works that he distinguishes in the preceding chapter. To the first category belong works that he knows by both author and title (or subject matter). These include works written by Irenaeus (5.26.1) and his lesser known contemporaries, such as Heraclitus, Maximus, Candidus, Apion, Sextus, and Arabianus (5.27.1). To the second category belong works by many other authors, "of which we are unable from lack of evidence to give the date or any accounts of their history" (5.27.1). That is, Eusebius has read these works but found in them no personal or temporal allusions that allowed him to identify either their authors or the circumstances under which they wrote. To the third category belong those works that can be approximately dated but whose authors are unknown to Eusebius:

> And there are many others also which have reached us, but we cannot even give their names, yet they are orthodox and Christian, as their interpretation of the divine Scripture demonstrates, but the writers are unknown to us because their names are not given in their writings. (5.27.1)

Eusebius begins chapter 28 by referring to "one of these" anonymous orthodox churchmen as the author of the work from which he will quote (5.28.1). The author is unknown to Eusebius because his name does not appear in his work (5.27.1), yet the work itself contains references to events that happened at the end of the second century and the beginning of the third.

Ancient and modern writers have occasionally attempted to identify this unknown author. At least three names have been proposed. The first person to have been conjectured as the author is Origen. This conjecture is an ancient one, known already to Theodoret of Cyrus but correctly rejected by him. "Some assume it is a work of Origen, but the style refutes those who claim this" (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 85.392B).[29]

The second person to have been conjectured as the author is Gaius (or Caius),[30] a Roman theologian and scholar who wrote an anti-Montanist

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[29] The translation is my own. Theodoret himself is not dogmatic on his rejection of Origen's putative authorship of the work. He refrains from offering an alternative conjecture and simply proceeds by saying, "Whether he [= Origen] or another wrote it" (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 83.393B).

[30] For a defense of Gaius's authorship of the treatise, see esp. Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98; see also Salmon's article on "Caius" in the same work, viz., *A Dictionary*, 1.385–86. Condensed and edited versions of both articles are available in H. Wace and W. C. Piercy (eds.), *A Dictionary of Christian*

work entitled *The Dialogue with Proclus* during the time of Zephyrinus (199[?]–217)[31] and who was also embroiled in a controversy over the reception of the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse into the NT canon. The basis for the conjecture is a passage in codex 48 of the *Bibliotheca* of Photius, the ninth-century patriarch of Constantinople. In this codex Photius is discussing a work entitled *On the Universe*, which was in his time attributed to Flavius Josephus. Photius remarks that the marginalia[32] of his manuscript attribute the work, not to Josephus, but to Gaius:

> But I found in notes in the margin that the work is not by Josephus, but by a certain Gaius, a presbyter living in Rome, said (φασί) to be the author of *The Labyrinth*; there is also said to be a dialogue of his against one Proclus, a strenuous champion of the Montanist heresy. As our treatise was left without an author's name the story goes (φασί) that some attributed it to Josephus, others to Justin Martyr, and a third group to Irenaeus, just as some

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Biography (London: John Murray, 1911; repr. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994) 141 ("Caius") and 482–90 ("Hippolytus Romanus") esp. 487. Hilgenfeld, *Ketzergeschichte*, 612–13, regards Caius as "perhaps" the author. See also ANF 5.601–2, where the excerpts from Eusebius are translated as fragments from Caius (Gaius), and the approximately 30 pages of texts (with notes) assigned to Caius in the collection of pre-Nicene texts by M. J. Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae* (5 vols.; rev. ed. Oxonii: E Typographeo Academico, 1846–48). For the revival of this possibility in more recent times, see Fortenbaugh, Huby, Sharples, and Gutas, *Theophrastus*, 1.105 (frg. 57), who treat the work as anonymous but give "Gaius or Caius?" as the possible author.

Finally, it should be noted that L. A. Muratori, who discovered the so-called Muratorian Canon in Milan's Ambrosian Library in 1740 and published it later that same year, attributed the canon to Gaius, chiefly on the grounds that it ends with a rejection of Cataphrygian (Montanist) writings. That attribution is impossible because the author of this canon, unlike Gaius, accepted both the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse. On this highly debated canon, see the important contribution by Everett Ferguson, "Canon Muratori: Date and Provenance," *StPat* 17 (1982) 677–83.

[31] Eusebius knows this work (*Hist. eccl.* 2.25.6; 3.28.1; 31.4; 6.20.3) and describes its author Gaius as a quite learned (6.20.3) and orthodox churchman (2.25.6) who wrote during the time of Zephyrinus (2.25.6; 6.20.3). This description fits what Eusebius says about the author of the treatise against Artemon (5.27.1; 28.1), but Eusebius obviously does not recognize him as the author of this work, if indeed he was.

[32] Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 47, dates the scholion to the seventh century or later.

people attributed *The Labyrinth* to Origen.[33] However, there is indeed a book by Gaius who composed *The Labyrinth*, since he personally at the end of *The Labyrinth* gives evidence that he is the author of a work *On the Nature of the Universe*. But whether it is the present work or another is not yet clear to me.[34]

This Gaius is said (φασί) to have been a presbyter of the Roman church in the time of Popes Victor and Zephyrinus, and to have been elected bishop of the gentiles.[35] He also composed a work specially directed against the heresy of Artemon, and wrote a serious dialogue against Proclus the supporter of Montanus, in which he enumerates only thirteen letters by St. Paul, not counting as genuine the *Letter to the Hebrews*.[36]

The scholiast used by Photius thus makes Gaius the author of four separate works: 1) *On the Nature of the Universe*; 2) *The Labyrinth*; 3) *The Dialogue with Proclus*; and 4) *Against the Heresy of Artemon*. Although Photius is explicitly relying on secondhand information (φασί: "they say") for the information that he provides about Gaius, his only personal uncertainty concerns the question of whether *On the Universe* is identical to Gaius's *On the Nature of the Universe*.[37] For our purposes, however, the chief point comes in the scholiast's affirmation that Gaius not only wrote *The Labyrinth* (τὸν λαβύρινθον)[38] but also

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[33] For Origen as the conjectured author of the work Eusebius uses, see Theodoret of Cyrus *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 (quoted above) and Nicephorus Callistus *Hist. eccl.* 4.20 (= *PG* 145.1029C).

[34] Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 47, understands the "me" here to be the Byzantine critic whose scholion Photius is citing. But it is more likely that Photius is here referring to himself, as he does at the beginning of the scholion ("I found"). His repetition of φασί in the next sentence serves to indicate that he has resumed his citation of the scholion. The position taken here is also that of Nautin, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte*, 116 n. 3.

[35] On this obscure phrase, see Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 47, and Nautin, *Le dossier d' Hippolyte*, 117–18.

[36] The translation, with minor modifications and one important correction, is that of N. G. Wilson, *Photius, The Bibliotheca* (London: Duckworth, 1994) 37–38. Wilson mistakenly translates Photius as saying that some people attributed *The Labyrinth* to "Irenaeus," whereas Photius clearly says that it was attributed by some to "Origen." For the text, see *PG* 103.85A and René Henry, *Photius, Bibliothèque*, vol. 1, *Codices 1–84* (Collection Byzantine; Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1959) 34–35.

[37] See note 34 above.

[38] On Gaius's authorship of *The Labyrinth*, the scholiast (or perhaps Photius himself) is emphatic: the work is truly (τῇ ἀληθείᾳ) by Gaius because he

"composed a work specially (ἰδίως) directed against the heresy of Artemon (κατὰ τῆς Ἀρτέμωνος αἱρέσεως)." The relationship between these two works will receive attention later in this essay; for now it is sufficient to note that Eusebius introduces his anonymous document as a work "against the heresy of Artemon (κατὰ τῆς Ἀρτέμωνος αἱρέσεως)" (*Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1), a characterization that corresponds precisely to the scholiast's description of the work attributed to Gaius.

The third person to have been conjectured as the author is Hippolytus of Rome,[39] who championed the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse against Gaius's rejection of it. In support of this identification, advocates typically appeal to the very passage from Photius quoted above that identifies Gaius as the author. Whereas Photius is uncertain whether Josephus or Gaius is the author of *On the Universe*, modern scholars commonly attribute this work to Hippolytus.[40] Furthermore, Photius's reference to *The Labyrinth* is almost certainly a reference to the work of Hippolytus that modern scholars call the *Philosophumena*, or *Refutatio omnium haeresium*. Toward the end of that work, Hippolytus makes reference to a work of his entitled *On the Nature of the Universe* (περὶ τῆς τοῦ παντὸς οὐσίας),[41] which

himself (αὐτός) refers to it at the end of his *On the Existence of the Universe*.

[39] See, for example, Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, 2.142; J. B. Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus?" *Journal of Philology* 1 (1868) 98–112, and *The Apostolic Fathers: Clement, Ignatius, and Polycarp* (2 parts in 5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1889–90) 2.377–88; Adolf von Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* (2 vols., with vol. 2 entitled *Die Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius*; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897–1904) 1.623–24; 2.224–26; A. d'Alès, *La théologie de saint Hippolyte* (Bibliothèque de théologie historique; Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1906) xxxii–xxxv, 107–9; O. Bardenhewer, *Die Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (5 vols.; 2d ed.; Freiburg im Br.: Herder, 1913–32) 2.567–68; Connolly, "Eusebius," 73–79; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (3 vols.; Utrecht: SPECTRUM, 1950) 2.196; and J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (rev. ed.; New York: Harper & Row, 1978) 117.

[40] The most important scholar to reject Hippolytus's authorship of the *Philosophumena* is P. Nautin, *Hippolyte et Josipe: Contribution à l'histoire de la littérature chrétienne du troisième siècle* (Paris: Cerf, 1947), who attributes it to an otherwise unknown Josipe. See also Nautin's "La controverse sur l'auteur de l'Elenchos," *RHE* 47 (1952) 5–43.

[41] Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 10.32 (10.28 in the ANF).

matches Photius's statement that the author "personally at the end of *The Labyrinth* gives evidence that he is the author of a work *On the Nature of the Universe*" (*Bibl.* 48). The title used by Photius, *The Labyrinth*, derives from Hippolytus's reference in 10.1 of the *Philosophumena* to the "labyrinth of heresies" through which he has burst. Inasmuch as the tenth book of the *Philosophumena* probably circulated separately from the other books and the term "the labyrinth" stood at the beginning of this book, the use of *The Labyrinth* as a title for the work—especially of book 10—is easily understandable.[42] In short, the scholiast cited by Photius was correct in identifying the author of *On the (Nature of the) Universe* and *The Labyrinth* as one and the same, but mistaken in giving that author's name as Gaius. The true author was Hippolytus, a man about whom Eusebius knew exceedingly little, not even his place of activity (*Hist. eccl.* 6.20.2) and only a few of his works (6.22.1).

Therefore, at least two of the four works that Photius's scholiast attributes to Gaius were written by Hippolytus. What about the other two? With the notable exception of J. B. Lightfoot, who in an article published in 1868 denied even the existence of Gaius and attributed *The Dialogue with Proclus* to Hippolytus,[43] most scholars have continued to affirm Gaius's authorship of this anti-Montanist work.[44] But *Against the Heresy of Artemon* has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Most scholars regard this as the work used by Eusebius, and, following the lead of Theodoret, make *Against the Heresy of Artemon* identical to *The Little Labyrinth*. This identification is indeed persuasive, but it does not settle the question of authorship.

Some scholars, such as Routh and Lightfoot in his 1868 essay, have simply equated *The Little Labyrinth* (the title given by Theodoret) with *The Labyrinth* (one of the titles given by Photius) and thus assigned the

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[42] The thesis that book 10 of the *Philosophumena* probably circulated independently of books 1–9 is based on two arguments. First, it is a summary of the preceding books and thus could be used separately without much difficulty. Second, as Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 97, points out, Gustav Volkmar in his *Hippolytus und die römischen Zeitgenossen* (Zürich: E. Kiesling, 1855) "established that Theodoret was acquainted with the tenth book of our treatise but not with the preceding nine. This tenth book, then, must have been in separate circulation." See also Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, 2.212, who concur with this judgment and refer to Theodoret *Haer. fab. comp.* 1.17–24.

[43] Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus?" 98–112.

[44] See, for example, B. Altaner, *Patrology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1960) 138.

work to Hippolytus.[45] But *The Labyrinth* is the title for (at least book 10 of) Hippolytus's *Philosophumena*, and this is not the work used by Eusebius. Lightfoot himself later recognized that *The Little Labyrinth* and *The Labyrinth* were separate works, but he now attributed both to Hippolytus.[46] His argument for this attribution was essentially twofold. First, he emphasized that Photius himself had probably not read *The Little Labyrinth*, so that his attribution of the work to Gaius was based solely on what he found in the marginalia of his manuscript.[47] Second, he argued that the nomenclature strongly suggested a common authorship of the two works. "The same person, who would describe a general work on heresies as penetrating a labyrinth, would select as the appropriate title for a special treatise dealing with a particular group of heresies the *Little Labyrinth*."[48] Therefore, since Hippolytus was the author of *The Labyrinth*, he must also have been the author of *The Little Labyrinth*.[49]

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[45] Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae*, 2.142; Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus?" 99–100.

[46] Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.377–88. In a footnote on pages 379–80, he indicates that his earlier identification of *The Little Labyrinth* with *The Labyrinth* was not original with him but that he was simply doing "what writers before me had done." He apparently has Routh in mind but does not mention him by name. It should also be pointed out that Lightfoot also abandoned his earlier hypothesis that Gaius was merely a literary creation of Hippolytus.

[47] Ibid., 2.379. To emphasize that Photius is drawing on secondhand information, Lightfoot translates the key line as follows: "They say that this Gaius composed another treatise also specially directed *against the heresy of Artemon*."

[48] Ibid., 2.379–80. This argument is often repeated by subsequent scholars. See, for instance, Harnack, *Chronologie*, 2.225; Bardenhewer, *Geschichte*, 2.568; Connolly, "Eusebius," 76; and Quasten, *Patrology*, 2.196: the title *The Little Labyrinth* "implies a comparison with a greater *Labyrinth*."

[49] A similar line of reasoning may have led to the ancient attribution of *The Little Labyrinth* to Origen (Theodoret *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 85.392B). The marginal note used by Photius indicates that some people attributed *The Labyrinth* (= the *Philosophumena*) to Origen. The attribution of this work to Origen also appears in the manuscript of the *Philosophumena* discovered by Minōides Mynas in 1842 in the convent on Mount Athos. This manuscript was published in 1851 by M. E. Miller, who also attributed the work to Origen because he saw that it was part of the *Philosophumena* contained in the Benedictine copy of Origen's works. This widespread attribution of *The Labyrinth* to Origen may be what prompted some ancient writers to attribute *The Little*

In addition to these and other arguments on behalf of Hippolytus,[50] a serious—indeed, fatal—objection to Gaius's authorship of the work was raised on internal grounds. The author of *The Little Labyrinth* accuses the Theodotians of being of the earth and speaking of the earth, and of not knowing him who comes from above. This description of them is undoubtedly drawn from John 3:31 ("he who comes from above is above all; he who is from the earth is of the earth and speaks of the earth"), a Gospel which Gaius both criticized and rejected in his *Dialogue with Proclus*.[51] Hippolytus, on the other hand, defended the Gospel of John against the attacks of Gaius. Therefore, of those modern scholars who hazard a guess as to the author's identity, the vast majority prefer Hippolytus or at least mention him as the likely author.

But there are also serious—and, in my judgment, insurmountable—objections to the identification of Hippolytus as the author of the work used by Eusebius. Two of the more important objections were already raised by Salmon more than a century ago and merit repetition and elaboration.[52] First, the author of *The Little Labyrinth* mentions Tatian as one of those earlier Christians who "wrote to the Gentiles on behalf of the truth and against the heresies of their own time" (Eus. *Hist. eccl.*

Labyrinth to him as well. See also Nautin, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte*, 117, esp. n. 4, and 119 n. 2, and compare Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 50.

[50] The only scholar, to my knowledge, who has attempted to make a significant case for Hippolytus on internal grounds is Connolly, "Eusebius," 74–75, who collects instances of various terms common to both *The Little Labyrinth* and Hippolytus (especially μηνιαῖος, σύστασις, τόλμημα, and ἀσκεῖν). In addition, one should note that Hippolytus clearly knew about both Theodotus the Shoemaker and Theodotus the Banker, two of the heretics condemned by the author of *The Little Labyrinth*. For the Shoemaker, see Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 7.35 and 10.23 (7.23 and 10.19 in the ANF); and *Contra Noetum* 3. For the Banker, see Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 7.36 (7.24 in the ANF); see also 10.24 (10.19 in the ANF). There is, however, no reference to Artemon in his writings.

[51] For this objection, see Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, 2.190. Gaius's criticism and rejection of the Gospel of John are mentioned in Dionysius bar Salibi's Syriac commentary on Revelation. Dionysius bar Salibi was a Jacobite bishop of Amid who was active in the 12th century. His knowledge of Gaius's views are derived from Hippolytus's attack on them. For a convenient translation of the pertinent fragments of bar Salibi, see J. D. Smith, "Gaius and the Controversy over the Johannine Literature" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1979) 589–95.

[52] Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98.

5.28.4).[53] Hippolytus, by contrast, is certain that Tatian is a heretic (*Philosophumena* 8.9; 10.14). It is highly improbable that Hippolytus would ever have reversed or modified his position on Tatian.[54]

Second, the portrait of Zephyrinus in *The Little Labyrinth* differs dramatically from the one sketched by Hippolytus.[55] The heretics condemned by the author of *The Little Labyrinth* argued that Zephyrinus was the real heretic, asserting that their position had been held from the time of the apostles until that of Victor. It was only during the time of Zephyrinus that the truth had been corrupted (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.3).[56] The author of *The Little Labyrinth* denies this charge, pointing out that Victor had excommunicated Theodotus the Shoemaker (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.6).[57] But this also implies that Zephyrinus had been as vigilant

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[53] The author of *The Little Labyrinth* views Tatian as orthodox because he, like the other writers whom he enumerates, spoke of Christ as God, and Theodotus did not. See R. M. Grant, *After the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967) 13, 22.

[54] It is generally held that ps.-Tertullian, *Adversus omnes haereses*, preserves a summary of Hippolytus's lost *Syntagma*, which was written in his early period. If so, Tatian was already condemned in that document (*Adv. omnes haer.* 7 in the ANF) as a heretic. For Tatian as condemned in the *Syntagma*, see Hilgenfeld, *Ketzergeschichte*, 60–61. He was, moreover, already condemned by Irenaeus (*Adv. haer.* 1.28; 3.23.8), often held to have been Hippolytus's teacher.

[55] On this point, see also A. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne* (3 vols.; Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1928) 2.564–65, and Nautin, *Le dossier d'Hippolyte*, 120 n. 2.

[56] In early heresiological debates, those who see themselves as orthodox typically argue that orthodoxy is chronologically prior to heresy (so Justin, Hegesippus, etc.). *The Little Labyrinth* proves that both sides in the dispute could make the same appeal. Some of the arguments of *The Little Labyrinth*'s opponents in support of their claim to preserve apostolic teaching are preserved in Epiphanius *Haer.* 54. Unfortunately, these texts do not indicate the post-apostolic teachers to whom they made appeal, though modern scholars suspect that Hermas was invoked by them. For heresy as archaism, see Turner, *Pattern of Christian Truth*, 132–41, esp. 133–36. On the use of historical precedent in debates about heresy and orthodoxy, see R. M. Grant, "The Uses of History in the Church before Nicaea," *StPat* 11 (1972) 166–78, esp. 170–72.

[57] See A. von Harnack, *History of Dogma*, (7 vols.; Longon: Williams & Norgate, 1898; repr. New York: Russell & Russell, 1958) 2.161 and 3.21, who emphasizes this excommunication, arguing that Theodotus was the first Christian to take his stand upon the rule of faith and yet be treated as a heretic

against these heretics as Victor;[58] indeed, during his episcopacy they had even resorted to forming a separate church with Natalius as their bishop.[59] When Natalius repented, he put on sackcloth and ashes and fell down in tears at the feet of Zephyrinus; because of his great display of penitence, the contrite Natalius was received back into the church's communion, but just barely (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8–12). In short, Zephyrinus emerges in this account as firm in doctrine and tough but ultimately compassionate in discipline, and Natalius is received back only because his tears moved "the compassionate church of the merciful Christ," clergy and laity alike (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.12).

This is hardly the portrait of Zephyrinus that emerges in Hippolytus's writings. Hippolytus derisively calls the good bishop ἰδιώτης καὶ ἀγράμματος, "untrained and uneducated"—the very terms used in Acts 4:13 to describe Peter and John—but Zephyrinus, in Hippolytus's judgment, lacked the παρρησία that characterized the apostles.[60] He was, moreover, "unskilled in ecclesiastical definitions," a foolish pawn in the hands of the evil parasite Callistus, who was denounced by Hippolytus as a heretic. Theologically naive, Zephyrinus became Callistus's puppet, and the pronouncements that he made caused ceaseless disturbances. All of this prompted Hippolytus to speak out in protest, "for the truth's sake" (*Philosophumena* 9.11 = 9.6 in the ANF).[61]

Furthermore, in *The Little Labyrinth* it is the confessor Natalius who is portrayed as covetous (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.12) and thus susceptible to the hefty salary that the heretics offered him (5.8.10). But Hippolytus portrays Zephyrinus as a person who would have been an even easier

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because he did not subscribe to a particular interpretation of that rule.

[58] For Zephyrinus as the continuator of Victor's theological policy, see La Piana, "The Roman Church at the End of the Second Century," 244.

[59] As Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98, mentions, this would be a strange point for Hippolytus to include in his narration since he himself was willing to serve as bishop over a schismatic group during the times of Callistus, Urban, and Pontianus.

[60] On παρρησία, see the collection of essays in J. T. Fitzgerald (ed.), *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech* (NovTSup 82; Leiden: Brill, 1996). I owe the reference to Acts 4:13 to Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 44.

[61] See also Hippolytus *Philosophumena* 9.2 (ANF): Zephyrinus was "an uninformed and shamefully corrupt man" who had Callistus as "a fellow-champion of these wicked tenets." I have here and, in general, used the ANF's translations of the *Philosophumena*.

target for the heretics to have pursued. Zephyrinus is depicted as "an uninformed and shamefully corrupt man. And he, being persuaded by proffered gain, was accustomed to connive at those who were present for the purpose of becoming disciples of Cleomenes" (*Philosophumena* 9.2 in the ANF). Indeed, "inasmuch as Zephyrinus was accessible to bribes and covetous, Callistus by luring him through presents, and by illicit demands, was enabled to seduce him into whatever course of action he pleased" (*Philosophumena* 9.11 = 9.6 in the ANF).

In short, Hippolytus regarded Zephyrinus as a weak individual, a soft disciplinarian, and an incompetent theologian—an easily corruptible fool, "an avaricious nitwit,"[62] not a staunch defender of the faith. Indeed, if one looks for those who were likely to have shared Hippolytus's negative assessment of Zephyrinus, the heretics condemned in *The Little Labyrinth* are better candidates than the author of that document.[63]

In view of these and other problems in attributing the document to Hippolytus, it is not surprising that the majority of contemporary scholars appear to reject Hippolytus's putative authorship and treat the work as strictly anonymous.[64] Until a cogent case can be made on behalf of some other early Christian author, *The Little Labyrinth* is best viewed as a truly anonymous document.

3. *Date*

The Little Labyrinth was obviously written prior to Eusebius's use of it in the first edition of his *Ecclesiastical History*, which has been dated anywhere from the last decade of the third century to the second decade of the fourth century.[65] The earliest possible date for *The Little Labyrinth*

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[62] The phrase is that of Grant, "Uses of History," 172.

[63] Connolly, who defends Hippolytus's authorship of *The Little Labyrinth*, is clearly aware of the problem ("Eusebius," 79).

[64] See, for instance, Altaner, *Patrology*, 187, who comments that "today its authenticity [as a work of Hippolytus] is mostly denied." Those who deny Hippolytus's authorship of the work include Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 49–51; J. Vergote, "Zwei koptische Fragmente einer unbekannten patristischen Schrift," *Orientalia christiana periodica* 4 (1938) 47–64, esp. 60; and Schöne, "Einbruch der antiken Logik und Textkritik," 252. To this list should now be added R. M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 92, who had previously regarded Hippolytus as the author of the work; see, for example, his "Uses of History," 171–72.

[65] For a brief survey of proposed dates for the *Ecclesiastical History*, see

is during the episcopate of Zephyrinus (199[?]–217) since he is mentioned in the document as the bishop before whom Natalius did penance. The author emphasizes that this event did not happen "long ago" but rather "in our own time"—an assertion that he makes twice (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8). The work, therefore, is certainly a product of the third century, but modern scholarship's attempts to provide a more precise date have been largely determined by the issue of authorship.

Salmon, the most vigorous defender of Gaius's authorship of the document, dated it "some little time after the episcopate of Callistus," thus shortly after 222.[66] Defenders of Hippolytus's authorship of the work necessarily place it before his death in 235 or 236. Some, such as Lightfoot, have placed it prior to the *Philosophumena*, which was written by Hippolytus at some point after the death of Callistus in 222 (9.12 = 9.7 in the ANF).[67] Connolly also places it not only prior to the *Philosophumena* but also prior to Hippolytus's "final breach with the Roman episcopate, which may have occurred only after the accession of Callistus, or at the earliest late in the pontificate of Zephyrinus."[68] Indeed, he seeks to solve the Zephyrinus problem by placing the work "within the episcopate of Zephyrinus"[69] and prior to the deterioration of relations between Hippolytus and the bishop. Although Connolly does not provide a specific date of composition, he obviously prefers to place the work during either the early or middle years of Zephyrinus's

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Attridge and Hata, "Introduction," 37–39.

[66] Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98. But it is not even certain that Gaius was alive after the episcopate of Zephyrinus. If Smith ("Gaius and the Controversy over the Johannine Literature," 140–68, 425) is correct in arguing that "Irenaeus was familiar with Gaius's opposition to the Gospel of John and Revelation some fifteen to twenty years prior to the actual composition of the *Dialogue with Proclus* [ca. 202 or 203], basing his comments in the *Adversus Haereses* [3.11.9] on information derived from oral discussions among the ecclesiasts at the time" (425), Gaius would be quite old in 222.

[67] Lightfoot, "Caius or Hippolytus?" 108–9, and *The Apostolic Fathers*, 2.385.

[68] Connolly, "Eusebius," 79. For this early dating, see also T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 134. See also M. Hengel, *Studies in Early Christianity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995) 247.

[69] Connolly, "Eusebius," 79. He thinks that the author's memory reached back to the episcopate of Victor (74), an assumption that is explicitly denied by Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98.

episcopate (199[?]–217). In short, he likely envisions the work as having been written in the first decade of the third century (200–210).[70]

In contrast to Lightfoot and Connolly, most defenders of Hippolytus's authorship of *The Little Labyrinth* have argued that the treatise was written after the *Philosophumena* because the latter does not mention Artemon and Eusebius says that the former does.[71] Therefore, both the *Philosophumena* and *The Little Labyrinth* are usually assigned to the period 222–235/36. Consequently, a date of circa 230 or 235 for *The Little Labyrinth* is often selected.[72]

Those who view the work as truly anonymous have tended to date it a little later, from 235 to a time somewhat past the middle of the century.[73] G. Bardy, for example, places it in the period 235–40. [74]R. M. Grant "wonders if the anti-Artemonist is not writing in Paul's time, not earlier in the third century."[75] Schwartz dates it simply "after [Hippolytus'] death" but tries to account for its later association with the works of Hippolytus. He begins by dating Hippolytus's *Chronicle* to 233/34 and the *Philosophumena* shortly thereafter and argues that these two works, plus *On the Nature of the Universe*, were left unsigned and uncopied at the time of Hippolytus's deportation in 235. *The Little*

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[70] If, as Grant believes, Hippolytus's negative assessment of Zephyrinus is already reflected in his *Commentary on Daniel*, which Grant dates to ca. 203, *The Little Labyrinth* would have to have been written at the very beginning of Zephyrinus's episcopate. See Grant, "Uses of History," 173.

[71] So, for example, Harnack, *Chronologie*, 2.224–25, and Quasten, *Patrology*, 2.196.

[72] This is the date given, for instance, by Lawlor and Oulton, *Eusebius*, 2.189; Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 3.20 n. 1, states that it was written in the third century and after the Philosophumena. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians*, agrees, for he views Hippolytus as the probable author (76) and regards Tertullian (who died after 220) as "almost a contemporary" (79).

[73] See, for instance, A. C. McGiffert, "The Church History of Eusebius," NPNF^2 1.246; R. J. Deferrari, *Eusebius Pamphili* (FC; 2 vols.; Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1953) 1.342 n. 1; H. J. Carpenter, "Popular Christianity and the Theologians in the Early Centuries," *JTS* n.s. 14 (1963) 294–310, esp. 304.

[74] For Bardy's views I am dependent on Connolly, "Eusebius," 76 n. 1, who himself is dependent on J. de Ghellinck, *Les recherches sur les origines du symbole des apôtres*, vol. 1 of *Patristique et moyen âge: Études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale* (3 vols.; Museum Lessianum; Bruxelles: Édition Universelle; Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946–48) 237 n. 3.

[75] Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 92.

Labyrinth was composed after Hippolytus's death by someone who, in imitation of his great *Labyrinth*, wrote a smaller work entitled *The Little Labyrinth*.[76] It was subsequently attached as an appendix to the larger *Labyrinth* and circulated together with it, both anonymously. This accounts for the attribution of the two works to the same author, be that Origen, Gaius, or Hippolytus.[77]

Because Eusebius says that his source was a treatise composed against the heresy of Artemon (*Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1), a key issue in the dating of the document is the time period of Artemon's activity. Artemon appears to have been an adoptionist who espoused views similar to the Dynamic Monarchianism later championed by Paul of Samosata.[78] In sources not directly or indirectly dependent on Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1, he is called Artemas,[79] which is itself a hypocoristic abbreviation of the name Artemidorus.[80] Artemon (Ἀρτέμων) is in turn a variant of Artemas (Ἀρτεμᾶς), just as Parmenon (Παρμένων) is a variant of Parmenas (Παρμενᾶς).[81] Eusebius's use of the name Artemon in *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1 likely reflects, not his own personal preference,[82] but the form of the name as used in his source. If the source did not, in fact, contain any references to Artemon, as Connolly has conjectured,[83]

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[76] Compare the explanation of Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98: "This book too may have begun either with the words 'little labyrinth,' or with the word 'labyrinth,' and have been called 'little' to distinguish it from another larger work called by the same name."

[77] Schwartz, "Zwei Predigten Hippolyts," 45–51.

[78] On Artemon, see note 20 above, and the discussions by Hilgenfeld, *Ketzergeschichte*, 612–15; Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 3.31–32; and J. F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon* (London: Methuen, 1903) 99–100.

[79] See the letter of the Antiochene Synod of 268 *apud Hist. eccl.* 7.30.16–17; the anti-Origenist in Pamphilus *Apol. Orig.* I (*PG* 17.578C–579A); Methodius *Symp.* 8.10; and Alexander the bishop of Alexandria *apud* Theodoret *Hist. eccl.* 1.4.35 (1.3 in the ANF). The name also appears in Theodoret *Haer. fab. comp.* 2.4 (= *PG* 83.389–92), where Theodoret is synthesizing the two names that appear in his sources.

[80] BDF § 125 (1), citing Varro *De lingua latina* 8.9.21, and A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 172.

[81] I draw this example from BDF § 125 (1).

[82] *Contra* Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 92.

[83] Connolly, "Eusebius," 76–77, argues that Eusebius "simply *classified* the work as anti-Artemonite" (emphasis his) in order to link it to Artemon, the

Eusebius would certainly have used the name Artemas. The latter appears three times in the letter of the Antiochene Synod of 268 that he cites in *Hist. eccl.* 7.30.2–17, and he undoubtedly has this letter in mind when he pens 5.28.1, for he explicitly wants to link Artemon with Paul of Samosata.

Three basic periods for Artemon's activity have been proposed. First, some place him in Rome at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century, thus during the episcopates of Victor (189–99[?]) and Zephyrinus (199[?]–217).[84] This is apparently the time that Theodoret of Cyrus (ca. 393–466) envisions Artemon as active, for he discusses him after Cerinthus and *before* Theodotus the Shoemaker (whom he has publicly denounced by Victor).[85] The Byzantine historian Nicephorus Callistus (ca. 1256–ca. 1335) has certainly understood Theodoret in this way, for he says that Theodotus was Artemon's successor (*Hist. eccl.* 4.20 = *PG* 145.1029C). In this case, there is a large gap of time between Artemon and Paul of Samosata, who became bishop of Antioch about 260. A similar great gap in time between Artemon and Paul is assumed by Epiphanius (ca. 315–403), who says that Paul "revived the sect of Artemon, who had lived many years before, at the beginning of it, and had been snuffed out" (*Panarion* 65.1.4).[86]

Despite the ancient testimony in favor of this time period for Artemon's activity, there are two major objections to it. The first is the silence of Hippolytus about Artemon, and the second is the fact that Artemon is still alive in 268, for the synodal letter concludes by saying sarcastically, "let this fellow [Paul] write to Artemas" (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1). But nearly eighty years separate the beginning of Victor's episcopate from the Antiochene Synod of 268, and nearly seventy years separate the beginning of Zephyrinus's episcopate from that date;

"father" of Paul of Samosata (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 7.30.16).

[84] See, for example, Hilgenfeld, *Ketzergeschichte*, 612–13; P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (3 vols.; New York: Scribner, 1860–67) 1.289; and "Artemon, Artemonites," *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrines*, 1.174; Deferrari, *Eusebius*, 1.342 n. 1.

[85] Theodoret apparently views Artemon as arriving prior to Theodotus, yet being active simultaneously, for he says that they led different factions (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 83.392D).

[86] The translation is by F. Williams, *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis: Books II and III (Sects 47–80, De Fide)* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 36; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 209. As Williams correctly notes (209 n. 6), Epiphanius is basing his comments here directly on Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1.

Artemon would have to be extremely old at this point. That is not impossible, but it would make the scarcity of information about him even more baffling.

Second, owing to these difficulties, other scholars place Artemon's arrival in Rome about 230 or 235; his relatively late arrival in the city would at least partially explain Hippolytus's silence about him in the *Philosophumena* and other writings.[87] Third, still others place Artemon's activity nearer the middle of the century.[88] This third option has the distinct advantage of placing him closer in time to the Antiochene Synod of 268, which is the only firm date that we have for him.

In my judgment, the dating of Artemon's activity should proceed from the synodal letter of 268. He is still alive at that time, and he is depicted as the "father" of Paul—a statement which does not necessarily mean that he was Paul's actual teacher, but which does strongly imply that he was Paul's older contemporary. Therefore, he belongs to the previous generation of teachers. That inference and Hippolytus's silence about him suggest that he was active no earlier than 235 or 240, and perhaps as late as 250. The author of *The Little Labyrinth* probably wrote his treatise soon thereafter, likely during the decade of the 240s and possibly during the early part of the 250s. The arrival of Artemon in Rome almost certainly provided the occasion for his writing, which he perhaps modeled after Hippolytus's great *Labyrinth.*

In support of such a relatively late date for the composition of the document are the following considerations. First, nothing in the three extracts indicates that the author was alive during the time of Victor.[89] His own period begins with Zephyrinus, which, as he says, was his "own time" (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8). That phrase does not imply that he was an adult when the Natalius episode took place, only that it happened during his lifetime and that of others in the Roman church. Eusebius, for

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[87] See, for example, Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 344, who places him about 230. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 3.31, places Artemon's arrival in Rome "20 to 30 years" after Theodotus the Banker, that is, "not . . . before ± 235." See also Brown, *Heresies*, 97, who places Artemon's arrival in Rome "three decades after Theodotus the Money-Changer."

[88] See, for example, R. Lyman, "Monarchianism," *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (ed. E. Ferguson; Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 846; New York: Garland, 1990) 612. This would place his period of activity during the time of Fabian (236–50).

[89] Salmon, "Hippolytus Romanus," 3.98, is correct on this point. See note 69 above.

example, says that Paul of Samosata tried to renew Artemon's heresy in "our time" (5.28.1), though Paul became bishop of Antioch some three years before Eusebius was born (in 263) and was deposed when Eusebius was only five (in 268).

Second, it is clear that Zephyrinus is no longer the bishop at the time that the author writes, for his opponents charge that the truth has been corrupted "from the time of Zephyrinus" (5.28.3). That phrase has meaning only if some significant amount of time has elapsed since the end of Zephyrinus's episcopate. Third, if the Natalius episode does not belong to the distant past ("not long ago"), neither does it belong to the immediate past; it is adduced as a reminder (*Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8) of something that happened years before. Fourth, not only Theodotus the Shoemaker (5.28.6) but also Theodotus the Banker and Asclepiodotus are regarded by the author as figures of the past (5.28.9), though their disciples (5.28.17) are still very much active and are the real source of the writer's consternation. Fifth, Clement of Alexandria is treated as a person of the past, someone who wrote before Victor's time (5.28.4). Since Clement seems to have outlived Victor by some fifteen years and died shortly before 215—during the time of Victor's successor Zephyrinus—it would be quite exceptional for a writer from the first third of the century to treat him in this fashion, even if some of Clement's writings did antedate Victor's episcopate.

Finally, Artemon and his followers probably did *not* view themselves as the successors of the Theodotians. As Harnack already noted, they doubtless knew that Victor had excommunicated Theodotus the Shoemaker but viewed that fact as irrelevant to their claim that the truth had first been corrupted during the time of Zephyrinus.[90] That the Christologies of Theodotus and Artemon were similar is undoubtedly true, but Theodoret explicitly says that Artemon was the leader of a *different faction* (ἑτέρας φρατρίας) from that of Theodotus (*Haer. fab. comp.* 2.5 = *PG* 83.392A). It is, therefore, not the Artemonites who want to connect the two men, but rather the author of *The Little Labyrinth*, who wants thereby to apply the Shoemaker's condemnation to Artemon. Eusebius builds on this important link so that he can connect Paul of Samosata to the Theodotians by means of Artemon.[91] Indeed, his three

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[90] Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 3.32, followed by McGiffert, "The Church History of Eusebius," 1.246 n. 1 and 1.247 n. 15.

[91] For an attempt to show that "the Samosatene heresy was a modification of the system of Artemon or some other Theodotian leader," see H. J. Lawlor,

quotations from *The Little Labyrinth* are carefully culled so as to make the connections conspicuous.[92]

For example, Theodotus the Shoemaker is charged by Eusebius and the author of *The Little Labyrinth* with regarding Christ as a "mere" man (5.28.2, 6),[93] a belief that is condemned as not only "new" (5.28.6) but also "blasphemous" and "heretical" (5.28.6). Theodotus is called the "founder" (ἀρχηγός) of this heresy (5.28.6) and is rightly excommunicated for it (5.28.6). Similarly, Paul of Samosata is condemned for regarding Christ as a "common" man (7.27.2), which is "heresy and blasphemy against Christ" (7.28.2). His ideas are "new" (7.30.4), and he is presented as the "founder" (ἀρχηγός) of this heresy at Antioch (7.29.1). As Theodotus is excommunicated by the bishop of Rome, so a synod of bishops meeting in Antioch excommunicates Paul (7.30.17). The synod, however, only condemns Paul for "strutting in the abominable heresy of Artemas" (7.30.17); it is Eusebius who makes Paul also strut in the heresy of the Theodotians.

There is a similar correspondence between Natalius and Paul. The former was "bishop of this heresy" in Rome (5.28.10), just as the latter was bishop of that same heresy in Antioch (7.27.1; 30.8–9, 18). Natalius received a salary for his position (5.28.10), just as Paul received an even greater salary for being "ducenarius," a title that he preferred to that of bishop (7.30.8). Natalius was covetous (5.28.12), but Paul was even worse; he was rapacious and soon became extremely wealthy through his lawless deeds and sacrilegious plunderings (7.30.7) and enjoyed a luxurious and decadent way of life (7.30.14). Natalius was attracted to the "first seat" (πρωτοκαθεδρία) that he enjoyed as bishop; once again, Paul outdid him in this regard by having a *bēma* and lofty throne erected for himself (7.30.9). In short, the vices of Natalius became full-blown in Paul. Unlike Paul, however, Natalius eventually repented—

"The Sayings of Paul of Samosata," *JTS* 19 (1918) 20–45, esp. 43–45. The quotation is taken from page 45. On the other hand, the Antiochene Synod may be simply asserting a link between Paul and Artemas so as to damn the former by means of the latter. In that case, its method is identical to that of the author of *The Little Labyrinth* in regard to Artemon and the earlier Theodotians.

[92] The following paragraphs are prompted by the comparisons made by Grant in his *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 92.

[93] Needless to say, the charge of psilanthropy, viz., that Theodotus and the other adoptionists proclaimed Christ as a "mere" man, reflects orthodoxy's pejorative assessment of adoptionist Christology, not the adoptionists' own emphasis.

prompted by a fierce scourging that he received from some angels—and was just barely received back into the church's communion (5.28.12). Paul, by contrast, was acclaimed an angel from heaven by his supporters (7.30.11), and owing to his overweening arrogance, did not repent and thus had the church's communion withdrawn from him (7.30.17).

Finally, Paul, like the Theodotians (5.28.13), is charged with departing from the canon of truth, the rule of ancient faith (7.30.6). Yet he, like them, is said to have had the audacity (5.28.19) to claim that *he* was the one who was upholding the ancient faith as taught in Scripture and celebrated in worship. That is, just as the author of *The Little Labyrinth* portrays his opponents as claiming that their Christology was both ancient and apostolic (5.28.2–3), so the synodal letter quoted by Eusebius has Paul reject hymns sung to Christ on the ground that they are "modern" songs composed by "modern" men (7.30.10).

In light of these points of correspondence, it is not surprising that Robert Grant can wonder if *The Little Labyrinth* was perhaps written in Paul's own time.[94] Such a date (in the 260s) is unlikely, for in that case the author undoubtedly would have subjected Paul to the same criticism that he did the Theodotians and Artemon. Therefore, a date sometime during the early middle third of the century (ca. 240–255) seems the most likely period for the composition of the document.

B. Conclusion

As the preceding discussion suggests, Eusebius regarded *The Little Labyrinth* as an important document that allowed him to connect Paul of Samosata with Theodotus. He was later to extend the connection to Marcellus, when the latter became "the real object of his polemic."[95] Eusebius called his source a σπούδασμα (*Hist. eccl.* 5.28.1), which suggests a composition undertaken with great zeal (σπουδή). It is the word, for example, that Sextus Empiricus uses to describe his own *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (3.278). That the piece required considerable effort is indicated by Eusebius's statement that it was a "laborious work," one made with toil (πεπονημένῳ, 5.28.1). Such positive descriptions of the treatise are obviously employed by Eusebius to

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[94] Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 92.

[95] R. L. Sample, "The Christology of the Council of Antioch (268 CE) Reconsidered," *CH* 48 (1979) 18–26, esp. 21.

enhance the value of his source, yet the three excerpts that he quotes give substance to his claim.

The anonymous author was certainly a person with rhetorical training[96] who used irony,[97] rhyme, and word plays[98] to attack the Theodotians and Artemon and defend the faith and Scriptures of the Roman church of his time. As for the content of his work, modern scholars can find grounds for both praise and blame. One may legitimately say, for example, that his criticisms of his opponents are sometimes naive and fail to address key issues in the debate—such as the *reasons* for the heretics' belief in "the orthodox corruption of Scripture" and their concomitant attempts to correct those corruptions

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[96] For a penetrating rhetorical and stylistic analysis of the work, see Schöne, "Einbruch der antiken Logik und Textkritik," 252–65.

[97] Ibid., 256 (on Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.13) and 259 (on 5.28.18). In the latter passage, the author mocks the Theodotians' fondness for logic and scientific knowledge by ironically invoking a logical argument. He presents only two possible explanations for their textual emendations ("either . . . or"), one of them being that they are "demoniacs," i.e., poor logicians guilty of gross folly (see also 5.28.9). Even they cannot be so "ignorant" (5.28.18) of the fact that there is no other logical explanation for their textual criticism.

[98] He claims, for example, that the Theodotians "study earth-measurement (γεωμετρία, i.e., geometry), for they are of the earth (γῆ) and they speak of the earth (γῆ) . . ." (Eus. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.14). A second play on words appears in 5.28.9: Theodotus was the first to be excommunicated "for this kind of thinking (φρονήσει), or rather of not thinking (ἀφροσύνῃ)," which McGiffert renders as "on account of this sentiment, or rather senselessness." Clever, too, is his statement in 5.28.14, that Euclid, the so-called father of geometry, "is industriously geometrized (γεωμετρεῖται)." For these word plays, see C. F. Cruse (trans.), *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus* (12th ed.; Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1869) 215; S. D. F. Salmond, "Caius," ANF 5.602 n. 6; Lake, *Eusebius*, 1.522 n. 1; McGiffert, "The Church History of Eusebius," 1.247 n. 20, and 1.248 nn. 24 and 25; and Deferrari, *Eusebius*, 1.345 nn. 16–17. In regard to the second of these word plays, one should note that it was fairly common to contrast wisdom and folly; see, for example, *Socratic Ep.* 8 (244,17 Malherbe). For a similar derogatory witticism, see the pun on the name Noetus in Epiphanius *Haer.* 57.2.8, where Noetus, whose name means "Brainy," is said in reality to be "Brainless." (The rendering of this pun is that of Williams, *Panarion*, 91.) Finally, the use of the term "geometrical" becomes frequent in later heresiological writings; Turner, *Pattern of Christian Truth*, 227, notes that "the adjective 'geometrical' is frequently applied to the subtle arguments of the heretics in the fourth century."

by textual criticism (5.28.15–19).[99] At the same time, some of his claims are undoubtedly correct historically, such as those that he makes about the Christology of the second-century writers whom he names (5.28.4–5).[100] Other claims made by him, however, are highly suspect, such as his assertion that some of the Theodotians denied both the Law and the Prophets (5.28.19).[101]

In conclusion, *The Little Labyrinth* is an important witness to developments in both the Greco-Roman world and the early church. Given the significance of the material quoted by Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, historians of early Christianity are justified in lamenting the fact that only three excerpts of the treatise have been preserved. At the same time, we should be grateful to Eusebius for at least quoting as much of the document as he did.

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[99] For a criticism of the author of *The Little Labyrinth* in this regard, see Turner, *Pattern of Christian Truth*, 175, and Bart D. Ehrman, "The Theodotians as Corruptors of Scripture," *StPat* 25 (1993) 46–51. For the demonstration that the orthodox were guilty of the same kind of activity condemned in *The Little Labyrinth*, see Ehrman's *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) esp. 47–118 ("Anti-Adoptionistic Corruptions of Scripture"). On the Theodotians' use of textual criticism, see also Schöne, "Einbruch der antiken Logik und Textkritik," 263–64, and Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians*, 80–86. See also A. Bludau, *Die Schriftfälschungen der Häretiker: Ein Beitrag zur Textkritik der Bibel* (NTAbh 11; Münster: Aschendorff, 1925) esp. 44–45.

[100] Grant, *After the New Testament*, 13.

[101] This claim is almost surely false, a residue of the much older Roman debate with Marcion. For criticism of the author in this regard, see McGiffert, "The Church History of Eusebius," 1.248 n. 30, and esp. Ehrman, "The Theodotians as Corruptors of Scripture," 48–49.

LIONS IN EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

Robert M. Grant

Bible dictionaries give references to the danger that lions posed to human beings and their flocks and note that the roar of the lion is so terrifying that it can be compared with the voice of God.[1] Ignatius of Antioch would have appreciated the comparison. He says that at Philadelphia he himself "cried out with a loud voice, the voice of God" (*Philad.* 7.1). He did not rely on such a voice when he looked forward to fighting wild beasts in the arena at Rome and claimed to the Ephesians that by their prayers he might obtain the privilege of fighting wild beasts (1.2). He most vehemently expresses his concern to the Roman Christians: "Let me be food for the beasts through which I can reach God. I am the wheat of God, and I am ground by the teeth of beasts so that I may be found pure bread of Christ; entice them to become my tomb and leave no trace of my body" (*Rom.* 4).[2] "I long for the beasts prepared for me, and I pray that they may be found prompt for me; I will even entice them to consume me promptly" (5.2). "May fire and cross and struggles with beasts come upon me, and cutting and tearing apart and rackings of bones, mangling of members, crushing of the whole body, wicked torments of the devil—may I but reach Jesus Christ" (5.3). Ignatius's model for dealing with the beasts is the apostle Paul, who claimed to "die daily" and asked what he would gain, humanly speaking, in fighting with the wild beasts at Ephesus unless the dead are raised (1 Cor 15:31–32). Yet Ignatius goes beyond Paul, who in fact did not face the beasts and did not mention them when listing his trials and tribulations (2 Cor 11:23–27). Ignatius struggles to balance his natural fears of torture against his supernatural longing for a martyr's death. In *Smyrnaeans* 4.2 he asks, "Why have I given myself up to death, to fire, the sword, wild beasts?" and answers that "near the sword is near God, with the wild beasts is with God."

He was terrified, however, by the prospect of being crunched by the jaws of wild beasts, though he heard of beasts that out of fear refused to

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[1] Amos 3:8; cf. Joel 3:16; Jer 25:30.

[2] Amos 3:13 says a shepherd might rescue "out of a lion's jaws two shin bones or the tip of an ear."

touch Christians (*Rom* 5.2). The late Latin *Martyrdom* of Ignatius tells of the lions that did not rend him but simply lay on him and crushed him so that his body could be preserved.[3]

Lions were indeed not always hostile: the *Acts of the Gallican Martyrs* tells us that at Lyons around 177 the Christian confessor Blandina was hung on a stake and offered to wild animals and that they too at first would not touch her, though they attacked later.[4] This may be a distant echo of the story of Daniel, who was put into the lions' pit because he prayed to God and not to the Persian king Darius. The beasts did not touch him, according to Daniel, because God sent an angel. The next day they "crunched up" his accusers with their wives and children. There may also be an eschatological implication, which we shall discuss later.

Paul and the Lion

Hippolytus of Rome knew of doubts about Daniel in the lions' den but insisted that the lions "rejoiced by shaking their tails as if submissive to a new Adam; they licked the holy feet of Daniel and rolled on his footprint in their desire to be trodden by him." After all, "if we believe that when Paul was condemned to the beasts the lion released against him lay down at his feet and licked him, how can we not believe the events told of Daniel?"[5] Jerome clearly indicates that the story about the lion appeared in the second-century *Acts of Paul*—a book whose author, according to Tertullian, was deposed from the presbyterate for writing it.[6] More sophisticated than Hippolytus, Jerome states that "we count the *Travels of Paul and Thecla* and the whole fable of the baptized lion [among the apocryphal writings]."[7] The lion in the story was not only friendly but a Christian as well.

About a century ago, the greatest of historians of early Christian literature, Adolf Harnack, rejected Jerome's testimony and denied that these acts, early if apocryphal, could have contained such a story.[8] In such

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[3] F. X. Funk and F. Diekamp, *Patres Apostolici* 2 (Tübingen: Laupp, 1913) 382.

[4] Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.41–42, 55–56.

[5] Hippolytus *Daniel Commentary* 3.29.4.

[6] Tertullian *De bapt.* 17.5.

[7] Jerome *Famous Men* 7.

[8] *Geschichte der altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius* 2.2 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1897) 493–505.

matters, however, papyrus evidence is worth two finesses, and the Hamburg papyrus edited by Carl Schmidt proved that Jerome was right.

Other First-Century Lions

Before setting forth the evidence, however, we should note that stories about lions and their humane relations with human beings were not uncommon in the first century. Pliny tells of a Syracusan traveling in Syria who was stopped by a lion so that he could pull a thorn out of its foot. (This lion was less rational than the dog of Sextus Empiricus, *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.70, which removes a thorn by rubbing its foot on the ground and by using its teeth.) A painting at Syracuse attests the story, Pliny says. Again, a native of Samos when landing on the African coast met a lion which persuaded him to extract a bone caught in its teeth. As long as he remained in the vicinity, the grateful animal brought meat to him.[9]

The most famous story of the first century dealt with Androclus and the lion. Seneca tells it in its simplest form. "We have seen a lion in the amphitheatre who recognized one of the *bestiarii* as his former keeper and protected him from the attack of the beasts."[10] The name of Androclus first appears in the lost *Aegyptiaca* by the polymath Apion, especially famous for his claim to have been everywhere and seen everything. This raconteur was in Rome not only under Caligula, when he headed an anti-Jewish embassy from Alexandria,[11] but under both Tiberius and Claudius. His name seems to be inscribed on the right instep of the "speaking" statue of "Memnon" (Amenophis III) at Thebes in Egypt, with the testimony that "I heard ([the sound] three times)."[12] In his writings too Apion claimed he was setting forth his own eyewitness testimony. He told the young Pliny about an herb with magical powers he had used to call up ghosts and ask Homer traditional

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[9] Pliny *HN* 8.56–58; other stories in 8.59–61; cf. August Marx, *Geschichte Märchen von dankbaren Tieren und Verwandtes* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1889) 55–70.

[10] Seneca *Ben.* 2.19.1.

[11] Josephus *Ant.* 18.257.

[12] W. Dittenberger, *Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae*, 662; cf. A. Bernand and E. Bernand, *Les inscriptions grecques et latines du Colosse de Memnon* (Cairo: Mémoires de l'institut français d'archéologie orientale du Caire 49, 1950, 50 n. 2), while L. Robert noted that the epithet was not used of truly important winners (Eos 48.2, 1956, 231). The Bernands insist that the author could be an unknown Apion, for he modestly [!] calls himself "winner of many victories."

literary questions about his native country and his parents' names (he did not dare repeat the answers).[13] He had seen that in the Sicilian spring Philinthia everything floats and nothing sinks and that in the "Egyptian labyrinth" (temple of Amenemhet III at Hawara) there "still exists" a fourteen-foot statue of Serapis.[14] Aelian thought perhaps he was "romancing" when he spoke of stags with four kidneys or, from ancient times, a two-headed crane and some other bird with four heads. Wellmann detected his work underlying Aelian's whole chapter, for the claim "I myself have seen an ox with five feet at Alexandria"[15] cannot come from Aelian himself because he "used to say he had never traveled to any part of the world outside Italy, had never embarked on a ship or known the sea."[16] The further remark, "These phenomena seem not to conform to nature at all, but I have spoken of what reached my own sight and hearing," therefore also comes from Apion. He could be critical: he considered that the claim by the priests of Hermopolis for the immortality of the ibis was "far indeed from the truth," and Aelian echoed his view, holding that the story was "absolutely false."[17]

Apion also claimed to have been an eyewitness of the love affair between a dolphin and a boy to whom he gave rides as far as two hundred stadia off Puteoli. After the boy died, the dolphin came looking for him and then pined away and died. "He was found lying on the shore by those who knew the story and was buried in the same tomb with his favorite."[18]

Aulus Gellius, another polymath a century later, relates that Apion (like Seneca) claimed to have seen Androclus and the lion in the Circus Maximus at Rome on an occasion when "Caesar" was present. "Of that event, since I happened to be at Rome, I was an eyewitness." A slave named Androclus had escaped from his master at Carthage and in a lion's den removed a large thorn (*stirps*) from the beast's paw. They lived in the cave for three years, but then Androclus was captured and

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[13] Pliny, 30.18 (F 15 Jacoby); cf. Josephus *C. Ap.* 2.14 (F 22).

[14] Pliny, 31.22 (F 29), 37.75 (F 16).

[15] Aelian, 11.40 (F 13), also from Aelian in Aristophanes *Epitome of Aristotle on Animals*, p. 130, 5–6 Lambros; cf. M. Wellmann, "Aelianus," *RE* 1 (1891) 486; A. L. Scholfield, *Aelian* 1 (LCL, 1948) xii n. 2.

[16] Philostratus *VS* 2.31, 625. He calls himself a Roman (Aelian, 12.25; cf. 14.45).

[17] Aelian, 10.29 (F 12).

[18] Aulus Gellius *NA* 6.8.4–7 (F 6); also in Pliny, 9.25 with Roman authorities. The younger Pliny insists (too much?) on the truth of a similar tale from Hippo in Africa (*Ep.* 9.33), without mentioning his uncle's use of it (9.26).

taken to Rome. Condemned to the beasts, he escaped death when the lion recognized him. "Androclus was freed, acquitted, and given the lion by a vote of the people." Afterwards "we used to see Androclus with the lion, attached to a modest leash, going about the shops in the whole city."[19] Similarly Aelian, possibly relying on Apion, tells that Androcles, a household slave of a Roman senator, escaped to Libya, where he removed a sharp stake from a lion's paw. Recaptured and sent to Rome, he was condemned to the beasts, but the lion refused to attack him. The spectators demanded liberty for man and beast. Aelian defends the story on the ground that "memory is indeed one of the attributes of animals." In fact, he has just told a story to show that lions have specific memories of those who mistreat them.[20]

The Lion in the Acts of Paul

Evidence for the Christian story finally appears in two papyrus fragments of the *Acts of Paul.* A Bodmer papyrus in Coptic relates that Paul was praying when a lion approached and lay down at his feet. Filled with the Spirit, Paul asked what he wanted, and the lion replied, "I wish to be baptized." After the apostle took the lion to a large river and immersed him three times in the name of Jesus Christ, the lion greeted Paul with, "Grace be with you." The apostle replied, "And also with you," as the beast ran away into the country.[21] The Berlin Greek papyrus of the late third century tells that Paul and the lion were in the arena at Ephesus[22] and recognized each other when the lion with a human voice said, "Grace be with you," and Paul returned the salutation. Paul asked,

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[19] Aulus Gellius *NA* 5.14 (=F 5 Jacoby).

[20] Aelian, 7.48; 7.23. Another version of the story appears among the Latin fables of Aesop. A shepherd takes the thorn out and later, falsely accused of a crime, is recognized by the lion "at the next circus." Cf. L. W. Daly, *Aesop without Morals* (New York: Yoseloff, 1961) 256 no. 563; B. E. Perry, *Babrius and Phaedrus* (LCL 1965) 526.

[21] W. Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha* 2 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965) 388–89; R. Kasser, "Acta Pauli 1959," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 40 (1960) 45–57. Cf. earlier the Ethiopic *Epistle of Pelagia,* trans. E. J. Goodspeed in *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 20 (1904) 95–108 (105), followed by G. Krüger, "Noch einmal der getaufte Löwe," *ZNW* 5 (1904) 261–63.

[22] The location at Ephesus may be an inference from 1 Cor 15:32 with its ambiguous reference to fighting beasts in that city. Another text is 2 Tim 4:17, with Paul saved from the lion's jaws.

"Lion, was it you whom I baptized?" When the lion agreed that it was, the proconsul sent more beasts against Paul and archers against the lions, but hail drove them off as the people cried out, "Save us, O God, save us, O God of the man who fought with the beasts!" Paul left Ephesus by ship, and the lion withdrew into the mountains.[23]

After Hippolytus, the lion appears again when Commodian insists that God's power to do anything includes making the mute speak and cites as examples Balaam's ass (Num 22:28–30), the dog who said to Simon Magus, "I cried out about Peter" (*Acts of Peter*[24]), and finally, after a reference to Paul's preaching, the lion that spoke with a "divine voice." The heresy-hunter Filastrius also dipped into the apocryphal Acts to find "talking cattle and dogs and beasts."[25] The story about Paul's companion Thecla and a friendly lioness is probably secondary,[26] as is the legend that Jerome took a thorn from a lion's paw, perhaps based on a tale told of the fifth-century abbot Gerasimus.[27]

George Bernard Shaw vigorously rewrote "Androcles," turning him into a Christian and using the story against the church, with a hundred pages of an ironic "preface on the prospects of Christianity." Probably this is the version most people know. Both Apion and the author of the *Acts of Paul* are forgotten, even though the latter claimed he wrote "for the love of Paul."[28] A satirical version, "Androcles and the Tiger," could still appear in T. Gay's Anglo-Indian collection of short stories published at Bombay a generation ago.[29]

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[23] *Acts of Paul* in C. Schmidt, ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΥ (Hamburg: Augustin, 1936) 38–43, p. 5 of the Hamburg papyrus. Bruce Metzger supplied the first English translation in "St. Paul and the Baptized Lion," *PSB* 39 (1945) 11–12 (I am grateful to him for an offprint).

[24] *Actus Petri cum Simone* 12 (p. 60, 5 Lipsius).

[25] Commodian *Carmen apologeticum* 618–22; Filastrius *Haer.* 88.6 (Corpus Christianorum Latinorum 9. 256); L. Vouaux, *Les Actes de Paul* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1913) 51, 53.

[26] R. A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* 1 (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1891) 259–63 (*Acta Pauli et Theclae* 33–37); and Ado of Vienne.

[27] H. Thurston and D. Attwater, *Butler's Lives of the Saints* (New York: Kenedy, 1956) 1.486–87; 3.692.

[28] Tertullian *De Bapt.* 7.5.

[29] Bombay: Somaya, c. 1967. Add that in August 1995 the *London Times* printed two reports on lions: one on disturbed people who climbed into tigers' or lions' enclosures at zoos (from the Psychiatric Bulletin of the Royal College of Psychiatrists), the other on brave and cowardly lionesses (from *Nature*). The themes remain "relevant."

Could the Lion Be Eschatological?

In the first- or second-century Jewish apocalypse known as 2 Esdras, the fifth vision includes a lion that speaks with a human voice to an eagle and is finally identified as the Messiah.[30] The animal recalls one of the "four living creatures" round the throne of God in Rev 4:6–7, for one of them is "like a lion." In other words, a lion can appear in an apocalyptic setting.

When Justin discusses the thousand years the saints will spend in the Jerusalem built on earth—a theme he takes from Revelation 20—he explicitly cites Isa 65:17–25, with its prediction of wolves feeding together with lambs and the lion eating straw like an ox, the snake eating dust like bread.[31] When Theophilus explains why wild animals and poisonous snakes exist, he adds a similar eschatological note:

> Wild animals are so called from their becoming brutal. They were not originally created evil by God; everything was good and very good (Gen 1:31). The sin of man made them evil; for when man transgressed, they transgressed with him.[32] If the master of a house acts properly, his servants necessarily live in good order; but if the master sins, his slaves sin with him.[33] Just so, it turned out that man, the master, sinned and the slaves sinned with him. When man again returns to his natural state and no longer does evil, they too will be restored to their original tameness.[34]

Irenaeus makes similar points, relying on earlier eschatological traditions:

> "When the world is reestablished in its primeval state all the animals must obey and be subject to man and return to the first food given by God, as before the disobedience they were subject to Adam (Gen 1:28–30) and ate the fruit of the earth. This is not the time to show that the lion will eat straw (Isa 11:7), but it indicates the size and opulence of the fruits, for if an animal like the lion eats straw, what will be the quality of the wheat whose straw is food fit for lions?"[35]

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[30] Latin 11.37; 12.1; 31–32.

[31] Justin *Dial.* 80.5, 81.1–4.

[32] Cf. Harnack, *Marcion. Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (2d ed., Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1924) 270*.

[33] Cf. Justin *Apol.* 2.2.7.

[34] Theophilus, 2.17; Isa 11:6–9 (cf. 65:25).

[35] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 5.33.4.

If the lion eats straw it is unlikely to eat people. These passages show that in the later second century lions cannot always have been regarded as future enemies of Christians. Irenaeus himself may also have written the *Letter of the Gallican Christians,*[36] with its report that when the Christian confessor Blandina was hung on a stake and offered to wild animals, at least at first they would not touch her, though later they did attack.[37] Our point is that while the lion's conversation with Paul is unexpected, it is in harmony with the general Christian idea of the "peaceable kingdom."

The Lion as a Symbol

Finally, according to Irenaeus the lion of Rev 4:7 is a symbol of one of the gospels because it points toward the power, primacy, and royalty of the Son of God.[38] Later Christians would identify the lion with the evangelist Mark, as at Venice, where his relics were supposedly preserved. For Irenaeus, however, the leonine character best suits the Gospel of John.

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[36] P. Nautin, *Lettres et écrivains chrétiens des ii^e^ et iii^e^ siècles* (Paris: Cerf, 1961) 54–61.

[37] Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 5.1.41–42, 56.

[38] Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 3.11.8.

CICERO'S SKETCH AND LACTANTIUS'S PLAN

Rowan A. Greer

Professor Ferguson's *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* represents an enormous contribution to our understanding of ancient Christianity. Scholars as well as students and teachers are in his debt. In his introduction and conclusion he outlines an understanding of the relationship between Christianity and culture in late antiquity that, while debateable, I find persuasive:[1]

What is to be made of these parallels [between Christianity and various aspects of its environment]? Do they explain away Christianity as a natural product of its environment?

Must they be explained away in order to defend the truth or validity of Christianity? Neither position is necessary. The Christian claim does not depend upon originality "in its teaching and practices," but upon its claim to be a divine revelation, a claim "not directly verifiable by historical examination."[2] This view implies we must distinguish the revelation from the ways in which it was articulated, and what we find in general terms is a claim presented as discontinuous with pagan thought and religion and yet in some respects continuous with Graeco-Roman culture. Many if not most early Christian writers saw their enterprise as the "remythologization" of the Gospel, designed to further the universal mission of the church.

It is from this point of view that I should like to add a modest footnote to Professor Ferguson's work. Scholars have long recognized that Lactantius was a Christian Cicero. To be sure, one usually encounters Lactantius because of the evidence he supplies in *On the Deaths of the Persecutors* for the Diocletian persecution and the events leading up to the Constantinian revolution. From Jerome to the present, most have dismissed Lactantius as a theologian. His grasp of scripture seems weak and secondhand. His view of Christ is clearly problematic by later standards, and his dualistic views of Satan and evil run the risk of

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[1] Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (2d ed., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 1.

[2] Ibid., 582.

playing into Manichaean hands. At the same time, we must be more cautious. Lactantius is writing almost a century before the completion of what R. P. C. Hanson calls the search for a Christian doctrine of God. Lactantius may not be significant as a theologian, but his writings are of interest because they give us evidence for how some Christians construed their faith during the vast upheavals represented by the Diocletian persecution and the Constantinian revolution. Appointed by Diocletian to the chair of Latin rhetoric in Nicomedia, Lactantius weathered the storm of persecution later unleashed by his imperial patron and became tutor to Crispus, Constantine's son. Thus we have the possibility of finding in Lactantius evidence not only for Christian views early in the third century but also for ways in which theology responded to the extraordinary circumstances of the time.

These considerations press beyond my more limited aim in this essay. I wish to focus more narrowly on the way Lactantius uses Cicero in his theology and to concentrate on those passages where Lactantius actually mentions Cicero by name.[3] The very fact that he refers specifically to Cicero is unusual. Most of our evidence from the first three centuries is, of course, Greek and betrays no awareness of Latin writers. Even Tertullian, Minucius Felix, and Cyprian fail to mention Cicero, though they may well have known his writings and were known to Lactantius.[4] Cicero (though "deceived") is for Lactantius the "greatest author of the Roman language" (*Inst.* 3.13). He is an "accomplished orator" and a "consummate philosopher" (*Inst.* 3.14, cf. 1.15).

Lactantius's attitude towards Cicero's eloquence is ambiguous. On the one hand, he can portray himself as "an insignificant person . . . devoid of eloquence," and yet he is capable by truth's eloquence of refuting "a man of such consummate eloquence" (*Inst.* 3.13). We might think of Augustine's pun that those "skilled in speaking" (*peritus*) are "doomed to destruction" *(perituras)*. On the other hand, Lactantius can

> wish that the power of eloquence had fallen to my lot, though not such as it was in Marcus Tullius. . . . And I could wish that this were so, for two reasons: either that men might more readily believe the truth when adorned

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[3] For parallel passages see the apparatus in S. Brandt's edition in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.*

[4] For an interesting aspect of the apologetic use of Latin sources, see the discussion of Constantine's use of Vergil's "messianic" *Eclogue* in Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987) 649ff. Lane Fox suggests the possibility that Lactantius is responsible for Constantine's use of the Vergilian passage.

> with embellishments, since they even believe falsehood, being captivated by the adornment of speech and the enticement of words; or, at all events, that the philosophers themselves might be overpowered by us, most of all by their own arms, in which they are accustomed to pride themselves and to place confidence. (*Inst.* 3.1)

If even Cicero, "the unparalleled example of eloquence itself, was often vanquished by men void of learning and eloquence," then how much more will truth's eloquence assisted by "weapons borrowed from their mutual wrangling" prevail (*Opificio* 20). Lactantius explicitly models his epilogue to *De ira* (22) on Cicero's in *Tusculans* 1.112–15, 118.

Cicero the philosopher, however, is more important to Lactantius than Cicero the orator. Cicero often follows Plato (*Inst.* 1.5), whom he regards as "the god of philosophers" (*Epit.* 33 [ANF 38], cf. *De rep.* 4.5.5). He also is "the greatest imitator of Plato," perhaps not because he is in all respects a Platonist but because he adopts Plato's dialogue form (*Inst.* 3.25). Lactantius recognizes the eclectic character of Cicero's thought, knows that he often reproduces Stoic ideas (*Inst.* 1.12, 17; 2.11), and sees him as "a defender of the Academic system," that is, a skeptical Platonist (*Inst.* 1.2). One can defend this assessment of Cicero. His teachers included the Middle Platonist Antiochus of Ascalon and the Middle Stoic Posidonius; and while he often seems disposed to a kind of dogmatism, he scarcely commits himself to a particular school of philosophy.

Lactantius discriminates among Cicero's opinions. Sometimes they are true; sometimes they are marred. Cicero can contradict himself and can even be in error. His truths are what we should expect. Cicero, "though ignorant of the sacred writings," agrees with the prophets that God's creation of humanity demonstrates his providence (*Inst.* 2.12; *De leg.* 1.7.22). In a passage from the *Republic* known to us only from Lactantius (3.17.27), Cicero's opinion that true justice transcends the civil law is "not inconsistent with the truth" (*Inst.* 5.12). Similarly, Cicero is right to see that "the union of human society" transcends the civil state (*Inst.* 6.6; *De offic.* 3.6.28). Lactantius cites several other passages from Cicero that refer to a cosmopolitan idea involving a universal human society governed by true law and justice.[5] Cicero,

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[5] *Inst.* 6.6 also citing *De offic.* 3.17.69 and 3.4.16; *Inst.* 6.11 appeals to *De offic.* 3.5.25 to show that humans while "obedient to nature" cannot injure others. In one passage unrelated to these, Lactantius cites *De offic.* 2.11.38 ("No one can be just who fears death, or pain, or exile, or want") as "a true sentiment."

therefore, agrees with two of Lactantius's central convictions, God's providence and the cosmopolitan unity of the human race.

Lactantius's admiration for Cicero is, obviously, not unqualified. Cicero mars his "simple and true sentiment" that a good person never does harm by adding the words "unless provoked by injury" (*Inst.* 6.19; *De offic.* 3.19.76). Similarly, Cicero undermines his idea of unrestricted bounty and hospitality by adding the consideration of utility.[6] And he often contradicts himself. Indeed, Cicero's basic contradiction is that he is "well aware that the deities which men worshipped were false" and yet supports "the system of religion which was publicly received" (*Inst.* 2.3).[7] Another religious contradiction betrays itself by Cicero's acceptance of pre-existent matter (*De nat. deor.* frg. 2; Loeb, p. 384), a view by which he becomes "a traitor or deserter" from his recognition of divine providence (*Inst.* 2.9; cf. 2.11). Even in his philosophy Cicero contradicts himself. He can virtually identify wisdom with philosophy; yet in another mood he recognizes he is not wise and does not know what is true.[8] Finally, Cicero wavers between regarding death as a blessing and supposing it might result in punishment.[9]

To some degree Lactantius is willing to excuse Cicero's contradictions because of his commitment to the skeptical Academy:

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[6] *Inst.* 6.12, citing *De offic.* 2.18.64; cf. *Inst.* 6.11, where *De offic.* 2.15.52, 54 is played off against *De leg.* 1.18.48.

[7] Here Lactantius cites a passage regarded by the Loeb edition of *De natura deorum* as frg. 1 of book 3 (p. 384). Other passages illustrate this fundamental contradiction of Cicero: *Inst.* 1.10 (*Verr.* 2.24.62; *harusp.* 20.42; *Milon* 27.73); *Inst.* 1.17 (*De nat. deor.* 3 destroys religion; *De nat. deor.* 1.91 shows Cicero did not know the truth); *Inst.* 2.7 (*De nat. deor.* 3.2.6 supports the *mos maiorum*).

[8] See *Inst.* 3.13, citing *De offic.* 2.2.5 (also cited *Epitome* 26): "philosophy is nothing else than the desire of wisdom, and . . . wisdom itself is the knowledge of things divine and human." In the same chapter Lactantius cites *Tusc.* 5.2.5 for Cicero's view that philosophy is the guide to life. Despite this high assessment of philosophy, Cicero also confesses his ignorance, thus undermining the implied identification of philosophy and wisdom. See *Inst.* 3.14, citing *Acad.*, frg. 18, Loeb, p. 461 ("we appear . . . blind to wisdom"); *Inst.* 1.17, 2.3; and *De ira* 11, citing *De nat. deor.* 1.21.60 ("I am more ready to say what is not true than what is"). The discussion of fortune in *Inst.* 3.28–29 also supplies evidence of Cicero's ignorance. Here the passages cited are *Consol.*, frg. 16; *Acad. post.* 1.12.44, 45; *Tusc.* 3.28.69; *Acad. post.* 1.7.29; *De offic.* 2.6.19; cf. *Acad. post.* 1.12.45 and *De nat. deor.* 1.1.1.

[9] See *Inst.* 3.19, where *De leg.*, frg. 1, Loeb, p. 518, is played off against *Consol.* frg. 15. See also *Inst.* 7.2 (citing *Tusc.* 1.41.99), 7.8 (citing *Tusc.* 1.16.38), 7.10 (citing *Tusc.* 1.46.110).

> For it will be impossible for Cicero to be more strongly refuted by any one than by Cicero himself. But let us make this concession to the custom and practice of the Academics, that men are permitted to speak with great freedom, and to entertain what sentiments they may wish. (*Inst.* 2.9)

At the same time, we really have more an explanation than an excuse, since the Academy "teaches nothing, excepting that you know your own ignorance" (*Inst.* 3.14). Lactantius can go still further and imply that even his ignorance does not excuse Cicero, who "was right . . . in saying . . . that he was held by error and wretched ignorance of the truth" (*Inst.* 3.18). He even assented to the delusion that "the ascent to heaven" is "open to men through slaughters and bloodshed" (*Inst.* 1.18, citing *De rep.* frg. 3, Loeb, p. 284).

Lactantius's ambiguous attitude towards Cicero is quite coherent with the evidence that can be found in writers as diverse as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, and Jerome. An almost nostalgic love of classical letters combines with a horror of their possible effect. At a theoretical level, the operative question becomes how to use the literature of paganism for Christian purposes. In what follows I wish to explore the different ways Lactantius uses Cicero. Cicero supplies him with proof texts and with ideas. Yet we can go further and argue that Lactantius engages in a dialogue, even an anguished argument, with Cicero that we do not find in his use of other authorities. Finally, I shall wish to suggest that it is from this dialogue that Lactantius derives the basic structure of the view of Christianity he expounds in *The Divine Institutes.*

Proof Texts, Evidence, and Themes

At one level Lactantius includes Cicero in what looks like the usual apologetic appeal to pagan writers. In much the same way that Justin Martyr can appeal to Plato to demonstrate that in some respects pagans say the same things as Christians, so Lactantius can cite Cicero. I am even tempted to suggest that he uses Cicero, Vergil, Ovid, Sallust, and other Latin writers very much the way Clement of Alexandria employs Homer and Hesiod. It is almost as though classical literature represents a pedagogue to the Greeks—or for Lactantius, to the Romans—the way the OT is a pedagogue to the Jews. Sometimes Lactantius makes the point in a very general fashion. Cicero discusses providence, "confirming the arguments of the Stoics, and himself adducing many new

ones . . . especially in those [books] which treat of the nature of the gods" (*Inst.* 1.2; cf. *De nat deor.* 1.1.2; 1.12.29; 1.23.69; 2.2.4; 2.21.55; 2.59.147).

This claim finds support a little later in the argument, where Lactantius includes passages from Cicero in a rather long list of testimonies to the one God taken from the poets and philosophers. We find Orpheus, Homer, Hesiod, Vergil, Ovid, Thales, Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Antisthenes, Cleanthes and Anaximenes, Chrysippus, Zeno, Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Seneca. Of these figures only five are actually cited—Orpheus, Vergil, Pythagoras, Cicero, and Seneca. Moreover, Vergil is cited for the opinion of Cleanthes and Anaximenes. The prooftexting is clearly oriented towards Latin texts, and the two texts cited from Cicero prove little more than that Cicero calls God supreme and argues for his providential government of the world (*Inst.* 1.5, citing *De leg.* 1.7.22, *De nat deor.* 2.30.77, and *Tusc.* 1.27.66).[10]

Several other passages appear to cite Cicero merely to prove a view Lactantius expounds. *De natura deorum* 1.44.124 speaks of God's benevolence, and Lactantius concludes that this implies that God punishes as well as rewards (*De ira* 8). Cicero's derivation of "Jupiter" and "Juno" from "giving help" (*iuvando: De nat. deor.* 2.25.64; 2.26.66) proves they are not divine, since "preserve" rather than "help" would be used to refer to divine aid. The existence of Jupiter's tomb in Crete confirms this point (*Inst.* 1.11).[11] Lactantius cites a fragment from the *Hortensius* to show that the one God is not thereby "desolate and solitary" (*Inst.* 1.7). Finally, if Cicero can complain about the crucifixion of Gavius because he was a Roman citizen, how much more can Lactantius lament the crucifixion of Christ, who was not only innocent but also the Son of God? (*Inst.* 4.18, *Verr.* 6.61.158).

Lactantius uses Cicero not only to prove the points he wishes to make but also as evidence for his argument. Of considerable interest is the fact

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[10] See Vincenzo Loi, *Lattanzio nella storia del linguaggio e del pensiero teologico preniceno* (Zurich: Pas-Verlag, 1970) 36f., where he discusses the citation from Pythagoras, modified in *De ira* 11 in a Stoic direction under the influence of Seneca.

[11] See *De nat. deor.* 3.21.53 and Minucius Felix, 23.13. Lactantius mentions Minucius Felix in this chapter. Cf. *Epitome* 17, citing *De nat. deor.* 2.28.70, where Cicero speaks of the introduction of "false and fictitious" gods. In *Inst.* 2.4 Lactantius uses Cicero's speeches against Verres to demonstrate the impotence of the pagan gods; Verres's destruction of the Sicilian idols meant that the Sicilians "had for three years experienced that those gods had no power" (*Verr.* 6.56.145; 5.45.99; 5.48.10; 5.49.108; 5.34.75; 5.43.95).

that Cicero supplies a warrant for Lactantius's frequent use of passages from the Hermetic Corpus and the Sibylline oracles.[12] He obviously sees no opposition between this "divine" literature and the writings of the poets and philosophers. Indeed, Cicero's translation of Aratus is a partial basis for the discussion of *Inst.* 5.5 (cf. *De nat. deor.* 2.41.104ff.). Cicero also supplies evidence for the way the Stoics interpreted the stories of the gods allegorically to refer to cosmogony and physics, for Euhemerus's explanation of the gods as apotheosized heroes, and for Posidonius's view that Epicurus was really an atheist.[13] Lactantius also cites Cicero for the Stoics' false view that the heavenly bodies are gods and their true view that God created humanity.[14]

Specific references and citations make it easy to see how Lactantius uses Cicero as proof and evidence for his argument. It is somewhat more difficult to describe the way in which themes from Cicero have informed his thought. There can, of course, be no doubt that Ciceronian texts saturate Lactantius's writings, and much scholarly work has been done to indicate the parallels.[15] At the same time, the multiplication of parallels creates a somewhat confusing picture, and it becomes difficult to know whether we are dealing with the influence of Cicero or with themes common in antiquity that may be found in Cicero's writings. It is for these reasons that I wish to restrict my study to those passages where Lactantius explicitly mentions or cites Cicero. By examining what

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[12] See *Inst.* 1.6 (*De nat. deor.* 3.22.56; cf. *De ira* 11) and *Inst.* 4.15 (*De div.* 1.34). But for Lactantius and *De divinatione*, see R. M. Ogilvie, *The Library of Lactantius* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978) 69: "The *De Divinatione* will not have been one of Lactantius's working texts."

[13] For allegorism see *Inst.* 1.12 (*De nat. deor.* 2.24.63–2.28.72) and *Inst.* 1.17 ("For the whole of his [Cicero's] third book respecting the Nature of the Gods altogether overthrows and destroys all religion"). For Euhemerus see *Inst.* 1.15 (*De nat. deor.* 2.24.62; 3.19.50, a fragment from the *Consolatio;* allusions to *De rep.* and *De gloria; De leg.* 2.8.19; *Tusc.* 1.13.29). Ennius's translation of Euhemerus may, however, be the more important source. See Ogilvie, op. cit., chap. 5, and for the *De gloria,* p. 65. For Posidonius's opinion of Epicurus, see *De ira* 4 (*De nat. deor.* 1.44.123).

[14] For the heavenly bodies, see *Inst.* 2.5 (*De nat. deor.* 2.21.54; 2.16.44). For the creation of humanity, see *Inst.* 2.11 (*De leg.* 1.7.22, cited explicitly in *Inst.* 2.12). We can add *Inst.* 7.14, where the chronology of the Chaldaeans reported by Cicero in *De div.* 1.19.36 is rejected.

[15] S. Brandt's edition in CSEL provides the easiest way of locating the parallels. See also V. Loi, *op. cit.*, Michel Perrin, *L'Homme Antique et Chrétien: l'anthropologie de Lactance 250–325* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1981), F. Fessler, *Benutzung der philosophischen Schriften Ciceros durch Laktanz* (diss., Leipzig-Berlin, 1913), I. Opelt, "Ciceros Schrift *De natura deorum* bei den lateinischen Kirchenvätern," *Antike und Abendland* 12 (1966) 141–55.

I should like to call Lactantius's dialogue with Cicero, we can see more clearly how the Christian author both borrows and adapts themes from Cicero. Nevertheless, before turning to this dialogue, particularly as found in books 5 and 6 of the *Institutes,* let me turn to one theme from book 3.

In *Inst.* 3.10 Lactantius argues that it is peculiar to humanity "to know and worship God." This is its chief good:

> And because reason itself is perfect in man, it is named wisdom, which renders man distinguished in this respect, that to him alone it is given to comprehend divine things. And concerning this the opinion of Cicero is true: "Of so many kinds of animals," he says, "there is none except man which has any knowledge of God; and among men themselves, there is no nation either so uncivilized or so savage, which, even if it is ignorant of due conceptions of the Deity, does not know that some conception of Him ought to be entertained." (*De leg.* 1.7.22, 1.8.24)

Lactantius is not citing Cicero exactly, and he certainly has in mind the entire discussion of *De leg.* 1.7.21–1.10.30. His reference (shortly after the passage just cited) to our upright posture suggests that he is thinking of *De leg.* 1.9.26: "[Nature] has made man alone erect, and has challenged him to look up toward heaven, as being, so to speak, akin to him, and his first home." Lactantius frequently appeals to our upright posture as a sign of our orientation to God (*Inst.* 1.2; 2.1; 3.27; 7.9; *De ira* 7). While Ovid is more likely to be the chief source for this ancient commonplace, Cicero's use of it certainly remains relevant.[16]

Lactantius, however, is doing more than borrowing a theme from Cicero; he is transforming the theme to make it Christian. The point of Cicero's argument is to show that the natural identity of humanity the microcosm with God or Nature the macrocosm is to be located in reason:

> And since right reason is Law, we must believe that men have Law also in common with the gods. Further, those who share Law must also share Justice; and those who share these are to be regarded as members of the same commonwealth. (1.7.23)

Lactantius thinks of the one creator God and not of the gods, Nature, or Reason. Moreover, his emphasis is upon humanity's relation to God

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[16] See the citation of Ovid *Met.* 1.85 in *Inst.* 2.1: "And when other animals bend forward and look to the earth, He gave to man an elevated countenance, and commanded him to look up to the heaven, and to raise his countenance erect to stars." Cf. the discussion in Perrin, *op. cit.*, 73–74. See also *De nat. deor.* 2.56.140 and 2.61.153.

rather than upon Cicero's preoccupation with the human commonwealth.[17] This emphasis becomes a presupposition of his discussion of justice in book 5.

At the beginning of book 5, Lactantius repeats the theme that humanity was created to know and worship God, but at the same time he gives another Christian twist to the theme by placing it in a quasi-historical framework. The golden age of Saturn of which the poets speak was a time of "justice" and "divine religion." Since God was "alike a Father to all," humans lived a common life and were "bountiful, beneficent, and liberal, which Tullius thought to be praises suitable to a king" (*Inst.* 5.6; *Deiot.* 26). But when Jupiter overthrew Saturn, idolatry replaced true worship, while justice was driven away. As a result, humans are "wicked through ignorance of what is right and good":

> And this, indeed, Cicero saw; for discoursing on the subject of the laws, he says: "As the world, with all its parts agreeing with one another, coheres and depends upon one and the same nature, so all men, being naturally confused among themselves, disagree through depravity; nor do they understand that they are related by blood, and that they are all subject to one and the same guardianship: for if this were kept in mind, assuredly men would live the life of the gods." *(Inst.* 5.8; *De leg.* frg. 2, Loeb, p. 518; cf. 1.7.23)

Needless to say, Cicero does not imagine human wickedness to be the product of idolatry. Lactantius is using him for his own Christian purpose, and the themes of the knowledge of God and of justice find a sea change that makes them central to Lactantius's argument.

The Dialogue with Cicero

In some sense we have already witnessed Lactantius's dialogue with Cicero in the way in which he agrees and disagrees with him. A brief passage in *Inst.* 3.13 characterizes Lactantius's attitude towards his source: "I could wish, therefore, that Cicero might for a short time rise from the dead, that a man of such consummate eloquence might be taught by an insignificant person who is devoid of eloquence." It is, of course, the teacher who is himself taught by Cicero, but taught in such

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[17] In *Inst.* 5.21 Lactantius cites *De leg.* 2.8.19 in a slightly altered form to show how God should be worshipped with "holiness" (*caste*).

a way that he has no hesitation in disagreeing with his teacher. Lactantius regards Cicero's explanation of religion in *De nat. deor.* 2.28.71–72 as "senseless." For Cicero those "who spent whole days in prayer and sacrifice to ensure that their children should outlive them were termed 'superstitious' (from *superstes*, a survivor)." In contrast, the religious were those "who carefully reviewed and . . . retraced all the lore of ritual." The distinction, says Lactantius, is meaningless, since both worshipped the same gods. "Religion" does not mean the collection (*religare*) of human lore, but refers to "the bond of piety (*religere*), because God has tied man to Himself, and bound him by piety."

Inst. 5.15–19 provides a better example of the dialogue since here Lactantius engages the full argument of book 3 of Cicero's *Republic*.[18] The basic discussion comprises two long speeches. Furius Philus delivers the first, reproducing Carneades' argument that civil society is incompatible with justice. Laelius speaks next, seeking to refute Furius and to defend justice. Furius argues for the folly of justice by using various examples. Someone wishing to sell a slave or a house would be foolish to let the prospective buyer know that the slave is a runaway or the house unhealthy. The stronger man in a shipwreck will be wise to seize a plank from a weaker one. In battle it would be foolish for someone escaping from the rout of an army not to seize a horse from a wounded man.[19]

Furius, or rather Carneades, then, equates justice with folly and wisdom with injustice. But there is a further point that relates the argument to the broader topic of the *Republic*. Lactantius summarizes the point as follows:

> When, therefore, he had thus divided justice into two parts, saying that the one was civil, the other natural, he subverted both: because the civil part is wisdom, but not justice; but the natural part is justice, but not wisdom. (5.17)

Presumably, the argument does not deny natural justice, but merely insists upon the impossibility of its actualization in civil society.[20] What

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[18] The fragmentary state of the *Republic* means that Lactantius is often our only source for portions of book 3. See the Loeb edition, pp. 193, 201, 206, 209, 210, 214.

[19] Cicero employs some of these examples in *De offic.* 3.13.54 and 3.23.89ff.

[20] Here I am following Eberhard Heck, "'Justitia civilis-justitia naturalis' à propos du jugement de Lactance concernant les discours sur la justice dans le 'De re publica' de Ciceron," *Lactance et son temps* (ed. J. Fontaine and M. Perrin; Paris: Éditions Beauchesne, 1978) 171–84. See 175: "Philus [Furius] donc ne conteste pas une justice

is surprising at first sight is that Lactantius regards the arguments as "altogether subtle and acute" and says that Cicero in Laelius's speech makes no attempt to refute them. Why does he render this verdict, and why does he spend so little time dealing with Laelius's defense of justice?

The answer becomes clear when we place Lactantius's dialogue with Cicero's *Republic* 3 in the context of his apologetic purpose in *Institutes* 5. Part of it revolves around Lactantius's willingness to accept the fact that Christian justice seems folly to the world, even though he equates it with natural justice. He makes the point repeatedly in 5.14–19. For example:[21]

> Justice by its own nature has a certain appearance of folly, and I am able to confirm this both by divine and human testimonies. But perhaps we should not succeed with them, unless we should teach them from their own authorities that no one can be just, a matter which is united with true wisdom, unless he also appears to be foolish. (*Inst.* 5.15)

These are, in fact, the words with which Lactantius introduces his dialogue with *Republic* 3; and it seems reasonably safe to conclude that he regards Cicero as proof of Paul's truth that what is wisdom to God is folly to the world (1 Cor 1–2).

The other part of the reason that Lactantius accepts Furius's argument has to do with the equation of civil law with injustice. Surrounding the section of *Institutes* 5 I am examining are long discussions of the persecution of Christians (9–14, 20–24).[22] The apologetic argument, then, needs to be seen against the background of the Diocletian persecution. The Roman state is, indeed, unjust, while the Christians alone possess the folly of true justice. Their justice requires them to renounce gain and selfish advantages, "since the nature of man is social and beneficent, in which respect alone he bears a relation to God" (*Inst.* 5.18). Moreover, Laelius's defense of justice on the grounds that "Virtue altogether wishes for honour; nor is there any other reward of virtue" (*De rep.*

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idéale par elle-même, mais seulement le fait qu'elle puisse être réalisée dans le monde."

[21] Cf. the similar passage in *Inst.* 5.4, where Cyprian's failure to refute Demetrianus is explained by the fact that Demetrianus "ought to have been refuted not by the testimonies of Scripture, which he plainly considered vain, fictitious, and false, but by arguments and reason."

[22] Two passages from Cicero are used to characterize the persecutors. In *Inst.* 5.8 Lactantius cites the passage from *De leg.*, frg. 2, Loeb, p. 518, already mentioned: "all men . . . disagree through depravity." In *Inst.* 5.11 he cites a passage from *De rep.* otherwise unknown but located in the Loeb edition at 4.1.1: "how much more wretched is it to have the mind of a beast while retaining human form!"

3.28.40) is clearly inadequate because it fails to consider the age to come. The true reward of virtue will be eternal life (*Inst.* 5.19). I should conclude that the dialogue with Cicero in *Institutes* 5 yields a persuasive apologetic argument and also points towards Lactantius's emphasis upon the social character of humanity and its relation to God.

Institutes 6 represents another extended, though somewhat more diffuse dialogue with Cicero and particularly with *De officiis.* The topic of the book is "true worship," but what Lactantius chiefly means by the term is the active life of virtue: "For that sacred and surpassing majesty requires from man nothing more than innocence alone; and if any one has presented this to God, he has sacrificed with sufficient piety and religion" (*Inst.* 6.1). Cicero, says Lactantius, agrees with this emphasis upon the virtuous life. In the *Hortensius* (frg. 47) he says that "while he prefers philosophy to all things, . . . he would rather have one short treatise respecting duty, than a long speech in behalf of a seditious man Cornelius." Lactantius interprets this statement as a recommendation of *De officiis* and a witness to the view that "nothing in the whole range of philosophy is better and more profitable than to give precepts for living" (*Inst.* 5.2; cf. *De offic.* 1.2.4 [*praecepta*] and 3.2.5 [*vivendi praecepta*]).

Lactantius, still agreeing with Cicero, elaborates this idea in *Inst.* 6.5. Cicero, following Panaetius the Stoic, is correct to argue in the third book of *De officiis* that "nothing can be useful or honourable which is not also good, and nothing useless and base which is not also evil." But knowledge of the good is of itself insufficient. We can know the way for our journey, but this knowledge is useless unless we walk the road. "[K]nowledge is of no avail unless it is followed up by action." Basic agreement with Cicero does not, however, mean that Lactantius regards his views as adequate. Christians are "able to give true precepts, being taught and enlightened by God." Moreover:

> . . . while their precepts remain, which they are accustomed to give correctly, with a view to uprightness, we will add to them things which were unknown to them, for the completion and consummation of righteousness, which they do not possess. But I will omit those things which are common to us and them, that I may not appear to borrow from those whose errors I have determined to convict and bring to light. (*Inst.* 6.2)

In this way Lactantius sets the terms for the dialogue.

Despite his disclaimer Lactantius does in fact reproduce one of Cicero's basic convictions, that of a cosmopolitan ideal for humanity. Virtue and justice depend upon "the union of human society," and Cicero is correct in seeing that this means not merely "citizens" but "the

common society of the human race" (*Inst.* 6.6; *De offic.* 3.6.28). Cicero, with "almost a divine voice," is also right to connect the unity of the human race with "a true law, right reason, agreeing with nature, diffused among all, unchanging, everlasting." This law, which Lactantius understands as God's heavenly law, "will bind all nations at all times; and there will be one common Maker and Ruler of all, even God, the framer, arbitrator, and proposer of this law" (*Inst.* 6.8; *De rep.* 3.22.33).[23]

Despite the fact that Lactantius finds this basic pattern in Cicero, he hastens to appeal to Cicero's own verdict that "we are not in possession of the real and lifelike figure of true law and genuine justice, we have nothing but delineations and sketches" (*Inst.* 6.6; *De offic.* 3.17.69).[24] Lactantius, then, sees his task as correcting and completing Cicero's "sketches." For this reason Cicero's precepts are sometimes true and sometimes false. He rightly sees that humans when following their nature cannot injure one another, that liberality must be gratuitous, that it is good to ransom captives, that the just person does not fear death, that one should forget injuries, and that there can be no virtue when pleasure reigns.[25] On the other hand, Cicero errs when he qualifies bounty and hospitality by adding the consideration of utility and when he leaves open the possibility of retaliation.[26]

Because Cicero was ignorant of true justice, "we must pardon this teacher who uses sketches and outlines" (*Inst.* 6.12). But we must also implore him to "[c]ast away those outlines and sketches of justice, and hold fast justice itself, true and fashioned to the life" (*Inst.* 6.11). It is true, as Cicero says, that humans are "born to justice" and must live mindful they must give an account to God.[27] But true justice and a right

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[23] The passage from *De rep.* is known to us only from Lactantius, and one is tempted to argue that he has altered Cicero's text. On the other hand, Lactantius's citations are often quite accurate. Ogilvie's general opinion suggests the first view. See op. cit., 69: "By contrast [to the *De divinatione*] the *De Officiis* is almost too familiar. It is quoted with great frequency and inaccuracy, suggesting that Lactantius relied much on his memory. That he himself was aware of this is suggested by the fact that in the second edition of the *D.I.* (as represented by the manuscript R) he makes a number of corrections."

[24] In this case Lactantius's citation of Cicero is exact. The contrast is between "expressam effigiem" and "umbra et imaginibus."

[25] See *Inst.* 6.11 (*De offic.* 3.5.25 and *De leg.* 1.18.48); *Inst.* 6.12 (*De offic.* 2.18.63); *Inst.* 6.17 (*De offic.* 2.11.38); *Inst.* 6.18 (*Pro Ligar.* 12.35); *Inst.* 6.20 (*Cato Major* 12.40f.).

[26] See *Inst.* 6.11 (*De offic.* 2.15.52, 54); *Inst.* 6.12 (*De offic.* 2.18.64); *Inst.* 6.18 (*De offic.* 3.19.76).

[27] "Born to justice" occurs in *De leg.* 1.10.28 and is cited by Lactantius in *Inst.* 6.25

view of God eluded him. The Christian revelation alone gives true precepts for living and a convincing account of how God must be worshipped:

> Whoever, therefore, has obeyed all these heavenly precepts, he is a worshipper of the true God, whose sacrifices are gentleness of spirit, and an innocent life, and good actions. . . . Therefore, upon the altar of God, which is truly very great, and which is placed in the heart of man, and cannot be defiled with blood, there is placed righteousness, patience, faith, innocence, chastity, and abstinence. (*Inst.* 6.24)[28]

Lactantius turns Cicero's sketch into a true plan by adding a long discussion of the two ways of virtue and vice, of truth and error (see especially *Inst.* 6.3–7). But what I wish to argue is that his dialogue with Cicero turns the sketch he discerns into a plan that, while it cannot be identified with the literary structure of the *Institutes,* represents Lactantius's articulation of a Christian party platform.

From Cicero's Sketch to a Christian Plan

In a general sense the "sketch" that Lactantius discerns in Cicero revolves around two simple axes, the relationship of humanity to God and a cosmopolitan ideal of a universal human society.[29] At first, however, it looks as though Lactantius has given us two rather different patterns. The first of these patterns dominates books 1–4 and is apologetic in character. The first two books defend the true religion against superstition. Book 3 turns to the question of wisdom and its relation to philosophy:

> Now, since the falsehood of superstitions has been shown in the two former books, and the origin itself of the whole error has been set forth, it is the business of this book to show the emptiness and falsehood of philosophy

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and *Epitome* 29 (ANF 34). The Ciceronian passages regarding conscience and giving an account to God are found in *Inst.* 6.24 (*De offic.* 3.10.44; 3.19.77; *Verr.* 2.11.28; 5.14.35). Also in *Inst.* 6.24 Lactantius rejects Cicero's opinion that repentance is impossible (*Acad. post.*, frg. 16, Loeb, p. 461).

[28] The text goes on to allude to the passage from *De rep.* 3.22.33 cited in chap. 8—the "true law" of which Cicero has only a sketch.

[29] The Ciceronian passages that seem central to me are found in *Inst.* 3.10; 3.13; 5.8; 6.6; and 6.8. See *supra* pp. 9, 11, 16.

> also, that, all error being removed, the truth may be brought to life and become manifest. *(Inst.* 3.2)

Thus, Christian religion and wisdom should supplant pagan superstition and philosophy. By religion and superstition Lactantius means primarily human associations for worship; by wisdom and philosophy, the quest for knowledge of God. Thus, we seem to have horizontal and vertical dimensions to his thought.

Nevertheless, these two dimensions are mutually involved with one another. The error of paganism is not only to substitute superstition for religion and philosophy for wisdom but also to sever religion from wisdom. Lactantius repeatedly insists that the two must be united:[30]

> Where, then, is wisdom joined with religion? There, indeed, where the one God is worshipped, where life and every action is referred to one source, and to one supreme authority: in short, the teachers of wisdom are the same, who are also the priests of God. . . . Therefore religion is contained in wisdom, and wisdom in religion. The one, then, cannot be separated from the other; because wisdom is nothing else but the worship of the true God with just and pious adoration. (*Inst.* 4.3)

Religion and wisdom, then, tend to fuse because the vertical relationship of humanity to God and the horizontal relationship of humans to one another are interdependent.[31]

The apologetic function of this schema is clear. Pagan religion is really superstition because it lacks any knowledge of the one true God. For the same reason, pagan philosophy is at best a vain search for wisdom. Lactantius, of course, makes Cicero agree. Cicero does not claim to be wise, and he admits that pagan religion is false. The divorce of philosophy and religion really leaves no alternative between superstition and atheism. Book 4 of the *Institutes* is a positive exposition of the Christian plan, which unites true religion and true wisdom. It would appear the case, then, that Cicero's sketch is rather to one side of the

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[30] See for example, *Inst.* 1.1; 3.11; 3.28; 3.30; 4.3; 5.1.

[31] Cf. *Inst.* 4.4: "Religion, therefore, cannot be divided from wisdom, nor can wisdom be separated from religion; because it is the same God, who ought to be understood, which is the part of wisdom, and to be honoured, which is the part of religion. But wisdom precedes, religion follows; for the knowledge of God comes first, His worship is the result of knowledge. Thus in the two names there is but one meaning, though it seems to be different in each case. For the one is concerned with the understanding, the other with action. But, however, they resemble two streams flowing from one fountain. But the fountain of wisdom and religion is God."

plan that dominates books 1–4. Here Lactantius's debt to the apologetic tradition he finds in Minucius Felix, Tertullian, and Cyprian is more evident; and his claim is to be following "Paul and Peter, and the other disciples," whose teaching "because it is true, everywhere agrees, and is altogether consistent with itself; and on this account it effects persuasion, because it is based on a consistent plan" (*Inst.* 5.1–2).

When we turn from the first four books of the *Institutes* to books 5 and 6, we find a somewhat different plan or schema. Instead of religion and wisdom we find justice and the worship of God, understood as the life of virtue. This schema is more theoretical than apologetic; and while Lactantius does not abandon his refutation of error, his argument presses in a more positive direction. And, of course, it is here that Cicero's sketch is transformed into the plan Lactantius outlines. Justice in a narrow sense refers to a condition of humanity in which dissension, enmity, and war do not exist. Lactantius identifies this condition with the golden age of Saturn:

> "Not yet had rage unsheathed maddened swords," as Germanicus Caesar speaks in his poem translated from Aratus, "Nor had discord been known among relatives." No, nor even among strangers: but there were no swords at all to be unsheathed. For who, when justice was present and in vigour would think respecting his own protection, since no one plotted against him; or respecting the destruction of another, since no one desired anything? (*Inst.* 5.5)

In Vergil's words (*Georg.* 1.126) "men sought all things in common." From another point of view, justice is an abstract ideal, "which is either by itself the greatest virtue, or by itself the fountain of virtue" (*Inst.* 5.5). In other words, justice is equatable with the common life of humanity, the cosmopolitan ideal that expresses itself in virtue. "When the agreement of men is taken away, virtue has no existence at all" (*Inst.* 6.6). The justice to which Lactantius appeals in book 5, then, expresses itself in the virtue he defines as the worship of God in book 6.[32]

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[32] Let me add that Lactantius's understanding of justice as the common life of humanity can find an egalitarian articulation. See *Inst.* 5.15: "God . . . willed that all should be equal. . . . In His sight no one is a slave, no one a master; for if all have the same Father, by an equal right we are all children. No one is poor in the sight of God, but he who is without justice; no one is rich, but he who is full of virtues. . . . Therefore neither the Romans nor the Greeks could possess justice, because they had men differing from one another by many degrees." Cf. *Epitome* 50 (ANF 55).

Lactantius, however, goes further than this by taking a larger view of justice:

> Although justice embraces all the virtues together, yet there are two, the chief of all, which cannot be torn asunder and separated from it—piety and equity . . . [which] are, as it were, its veins: for in these two fountains the whole of justice is contained. If, therefore, it is piety to know God, and the sum of this knowledge is that you worship Him, it is plain that he is ignorant of justice who does not possess the knowledge of God. (*Inst.* 5.15)

The human dimension of justice cannot exist without the knowledge of God, and that human dimension is the virtuous life, defined as the worship of God. The view Lactantius espouses is very like the one expounded by Augustine in *City of God* 19, where the argument takes Scipio's definition of the commonwealth in Cicero's *Republic* as a point of departure. But the point I should wish to make is that this elaboration of the theoretical plan informed by Cicero's sketch begins to cohere with the apologetic plan of books 1–4. To be sure, it is impossible to pin down Lactantius's terms; religion, wisdom, justice, and worship tend to coalesce as his argument progresses. But one cannot miss the heart of his plan, which insists that the common life of humanity is rooted in the Fatherhood of God.[33]

Let me make one last point. Lactantius gives his plan or his vision of the perfect unity of God and humanity a quasi-historical dimension. As I have noted, he accepts as "truth" the poets' idea of a golden age of justice (*Inst.* 5.5). When, however, Jupiter overthrew Saturn, he abolished the worship of the true God and introduced idolatry. And "the worship of God being taken away, men lost the knowledge of good and evil. Thus the common intercourse of life perished from among men, and the bond of human society was destroyed" (*Inst.* 5.5). Christ, however, came as "a messenger to bring back that old age, and justice which had been put to flight, that the human race might not be agitated by very great and perpetual errors" (*Inst.* 5.7). In one sense the golden age does not yet exist in fact, but Lactantius's exhortation is: "Lay aside every evil thought from your hearts, and that golden age will at once

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[33] God, for Lactantius, is like the Roman *paterfamilias* both Lord and Father (see, e.g., *Inst.* 4.3–4, 28). Moreover, God's fatherhood is tied to human brotherhood (see, e.g., *Inst.* 5.6, 23 and *Epitome* 29 [ANF 34]). See the discussion in Loi, *op. cit.*, 81ff. For Lactantius's understanding of justice, see Vinzenz Buchheit, "Die Definition der Gerechtigkeit bei Laktanz und seinen Vorgängern," *VC* 33 (1979) 356–74. Buchheit underlines the discontinuity of Lactantius's definition with his pagan sources.

return to you, which you cannot attain to by any other means than by beginning to worship the true God" (*Inst.* 5.8).

Conclusion

The sketch that Lactantius finds in Cicero is really little more than his version of the cosmopolitan ideal we associate primarily with Stoicism. No longer are we to think primarily of the city state or even of Rome. Instead, we are all citizens of the universe, meant to dwell together in harmony and peace. The ideal, of course, is just that; and it clearly has a religious character. Lactantius has christianized the cosmopolitan ideal by locating it in relation to the one creator God and by insisting that human society is impossible without the true knowledge and worship of God. He does not support this Christian plan by an appeal to Scripture; but if we take seriously his explanation that he has deliberately avoided citing Scripture on the grounds that outsiders would not be impressed, we can also take seriously his claim that the plan coheres with Scripture.[34] It would take little trouble to justify Lactantius's vision by an appeal to scripture, particularly by employing passages in the NT that underline the universal significance of Christ and the universal mission of the church. I am, of course, thinking primarily of Paul's Adam typology and his idea of the new creation and the new humanity. Such an appeal would make clear the ways in which the ancient cosmopolitan ideal has suffered a sea change by being christianized.

It would not be fair to conclude, however, without noting two themes in Lactantius's writings that tend to undermine the view of his thought

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[34] In the *Divine Institutes* Lactantius seldom cites Scripture, save in book 4, where he employs traditional Christian proof texts from the OT. The only NT passages I can find cited explicitly in book 4 are John 1:1–3 (*Inst.* 4.8) and John 2:19–20 (*Inst.* 4.18). In the rest of the work, I find only two explicit citations: Luke 14:11 as a "divine precept" (*Inst.* 5.16) and Psalm 90:4 (*Inst.* 7.14). The evidence does suggest that Lactantius knows the OT texts central to the early Christian apologetic, but we are left wondering whether his explicit refusal to use Scripture because it would not convince pagans may not be a mask for his own relative ignorance of Scripture. On the question of the degree to which Lactantius depends upon Cyprian's *Ad Quirinum*, see Paul McGuckin, "The Non-Cyprianic Scripture Texts in Lactantius's Divine Institutes," *VC* 36 (1982), 145–63. See especially 146: "It is clear enough that Lactantius certainly did use the *Ad Quirinum* as a scripture manual, but perhaps not in so dependent a manner as previous commentators have assumed. Cyprian presents his selected quotations under theological headings which Lactantius, in his book of christology, used as a guide in his presentation of the life of Jesus."

I have sought to expound. The first of these has to do with his addresses to Constantine in the *Institutes.* Both the manuscript evidence and the probable dating of the first edition of the *Institutes* before the Edict of Milan suggest that these passages, together with the "dualist" passages, are later additions.[35] If, however, as most scholars suppose, Lactantius is responsible for adding the dedications, then we have the possibility he wishes to identify his Christian plan with a Christian Rome. Lactantius, assuming he is the author, speaks of Constantine as "restoring justice" and as the one "by whom justice and wisdom have been restored to the altars of men" (*Inst.* 1.1). God has raised Constantine up "for the restoration of the house of justice." God has chosen him to "renew His holy religion" (*Inst.* 7.26 [7.27.11–17]). If we take these passages seriously, they tend to substitute Rome for cosmopolis. Lactantius undermines his own plan.

A similar problem attaches to the "dualist" passages. These sections appear to depend upon older Jewish Christian ideas revolving around the two ways and millenarian ideas. But by making God the author of evil and the maker of Satan, they seem almost Manichaean in character. They certainly drive in the direction of a sharp distinction between the saved and the damned and, in this way, undermine the universalist implications of Lactantius's plan. Entering upon a discussion of these two problems would take me far beyond my more modest aim. I should not wish to claim that I have done more than illuminate one dimension of Lactantius's thought. But it is, I think, a central dimension and one that illustrates Professor Ferguson's conclusion that lack of originality need not mean that a Christian writer is not really Christian. Perhaps Lactantius sees consistency as the hobgoblin of small minds. Perhaps the plan I have sought to describe is not really equatable with high theology. Nevertheless, his reworking of Cicero's cosmopolitan ideal needs to be taken seriously not only because it gives us a good idea of how some

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[35] See the helpful discussion of the problem and the various solutions that have been proposed in *Sources Chrétiennes*, 213, Lactance, *L'ouvrage du Dieu créateur*, Michel Perrin (Paris: Éditions du cerf, 1974) 86ff. Roughly speaking, Perrin's solution dates the *Divine Institutes* 305/313, the *Epitome* about 317, the dualist additions after the *Epitome*, and the dedications to Constantine as additions of Lactantius in 324. It is these dedications that are central to Cochrane's negative view of Lactantius's work. See Charles N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957 reprint) 191–97, esp. 196: "And, by thus delivering the future of Christianity into the hands of the new Machiavelli, it clearly forecast that era of 'godly and righteous' legislation, of generous but not excessive reform, which was to be the net contribution of Constantinianism to the Kingdom of God."

Christians understood their religion very early in the third century but also because we have a kind of dress rehearsal for the ideas Augustine elaborates in *City of God* 19.

INCENSE OFFERINGS IN THE SYRIAC *TRANSITUS MARIAE*: RITUAL AND KNOWLEDGE IN ANCIENT CHRISTIANITY

Susan Ashbrook Harvey

In his article "Spiritual Sacrifice in Early Christianity and Its Environment,"[1] Everett Ferguson explored the wide-ranging use and application of sacrificial language by Christian writers up to the crucial turning point of Eusebius of Caesarea and the era of Constantine. With reference to the broader Jewish and Greco-Roman religious traditions, he demonstrated that the eucharist was hardly the sole focus of Christian exploration of sacrificial themes and that developments in Christian theology as well as sacred ritual reflected a shift in the earliest Christian centuries from a spiritualized understanding of sacrifice towards an increasingly materialized presentation. Tradition and change marked the Christian use of sacrificial rituals and ideas as the post-Constantinian church took up the task of worship in its altered context of social and political triumph.

For a volume in his honor, it seems appropriate to take up an aspect of the sacrificial theme where Professor Ferguson left off. Post-Constantinian Christianity developed an increasingly elaborate liturgical and devotional life including, among other aspects, the addition of ritual patterns and activities drawn from sacrificial traditions common across the Mediterranean world. These developments concretized some of the sacrificial imagery that Christian writers had previously employed for metaphorical purposes. The introduction of incense into Christian sacred ritual, seen for the first time late in the fourth century, was part of this process. Initially this seems to have been a change in the material aspect of ritual only, rather than in the concepts conveyed by the symbolism of incense offerings. But the power of religious ritual lies in its ambiguity, its fluid and multivalent character.[2] The Christian use of incense after several centuries without it could not be entirely continuous with the ancient traditions of Judaism or Greek and Roman religions. Rather,

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[1] Everett Ferguson, "Spiritual Sacrifice in Early Christianity and Its Environment," *ANRW* 2.23.2.1151–89.

[2] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

incense carried inherited associations as well as meanings generated by and responsive to Christianity's own development.

In this study I will take the sacrificial image of incense offering and explore the ways in which its meanings and significations expanded for the church in the fifth and sixth centuries as its Christian usage became normative. To this end, I will consider the striking instance of incense imagery in the Syriac *Transitus Mariae*. Some prefatory remarks on the Christian use of incense will lay the context for this consideration.

A. *Christianity and Incense*

Emerging first as a religion that defined itself against its religious contexts, both Jewish and Greco-Roman, Christianity in its earliest centuries was the only religion of the ancient Mediterranean to exclude the use of incense from its worship rituals. In part this was due to the understanding of Christ's death as the final sacrifice and the eucharist as its ritual counterpart. But the Christian position was also affected by the identification of incense offerings with the Roman imperial cult, the most prominent focus for the persecution and martyrdom of early Christians. Martyred for refusal to make incense offerings, Christians could hardly burn incense in their own sacred rituals. In the later fourth century, well after legalization and on the rising tide of Christian triumphalism, scattered references to Christians burning incense in worship contexts begin to appear, almost entirely paraliturgical in setting: at funerals or the shrines of martyrs or saints, or in private prayer. A bare handful of problematic references indicate the introduction of incense into the liturgy itself around the same time. During the fifth century the climate shifted, and incense became a standard part of Christian liturgy and public worship as well as of private piety.[3]

The emergence of Christian incense use was part of the larger post-Constantinian turn towards a heavily enriched Christian ritual in which the grandeur of imperial court ceremony and biblical temple imagery were transposed into the ecclesial setting. This change was noteworthy for a dramatic shift in the role that sense perception came to play in Christian spirituality. In the wake of legalization, Christianity turned

[3] Though problematic, the work in E. G. C. F. Atchley, *A History of the Use of Incense in Divine Worship* (ACC 13; London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1909) remains basic.

from defining itself against the world to claiming the world, physical and cultural, as a realm of positive spiritual encounter. The Christian's religious experience in ritual, art, and devotional piety, previously austere in its sensory aspect, became a feast for the physical senses despite continuing tensions about the nature of the physical realm and the relation of physical experience to spirituality. Liturgy became a veritable celebration of the senses, with the visual power of pageantry, the tactile richness of procession and prostration, the sound of choirs, the taste of the eucharist and, drenching the air itself, the holy fragrance of incense. A deliberately sensual spirituality was well underway, and olfactory experience was a major aspect of this development.

Modern historians of Christian worship pay scant attention to the introduction of incense into Christian ritual or to its impact on devotional piety. Instead, abstract generalizations are used to characterize its functions: incense was mimetic at the Resurrection Matins on Sundays in Jerusalem, imaging the myrrh-bearing women at the tomb;[4] fumigatory and exorcistic at the beginning of a liturgy; honorific at the reading of the Gospel and at the Great Entrance; intercessory at matins; propitiatory and penitential at vespers.[5] These terms are descriptive with reference to larger sacrificial traditions of the ancient Mediterranean: they denote the manner by which ancient sacrificial ritual constituted and maintained relationships, ordering the power structures between the human and divine realms and within the human community itself.[6] But as we will see, late antique Christian piety deflected the signification of incense away from that of its sacrificial function to an epistemological one, wherein the relation between sense perception and religious

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[4] Egeria *Travels* 24.10. Egeria's report from Jerusalem can be dated to ca. 381; hers is the only mention of liturgical use of which we can be certain prior to the fifth century, and here, of course, the use is restricted to Sunday matins (the Resurrection Vigil) rather than the eucharistic liturgy proper.

[5] E.g., G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: A & C Black, 1945; repr. 1993) 425–30; R. Taft, *The Great Entrance: A History of the Transfer of Gifts and Other Preanaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (OCA 200; Rome 1975) 149–62; J. Mateos, *La célébration de la Parole dans la Liturgie byzantine: étude historique* (OCA 191; Rome, 1971) 135–39.

[6] M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); N. Jay, *Throughout Your Generations Forever: Sacrifice, Religion and Paternity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); S. K. Stowers, "Greeks Who Sacrifice and Those Who Do Not: Toward an Anthropology of Greek Religion," in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 293–333.

knowledge became the primary focus.[7] That is, incense becomes important for its role in the development of smell as a category of religious experience, significant for what it reveals, as distinct from what it establishes or reinforces, about the nature of human-divine relation.[8]

At the most basic level, the smell of incense conveyed two pan-Mediterranean religious concepts: incense as a sacrifice efficacious because it was burned and thereby wholly given to the divine; and the association of divinity with sweet scents, opposed to the putrid stench of decay and mortality.[9] As a ritual action, burning incense established a relationship between believer and deity. As a religious experience, the fragrance of incense in sacred ritual signified not only that relationship but also assurance of divine presence, immaterial and invisible but clearly known by the perception of its heavenly perfume. For early Christians, these images were most often drawn from Ps 141:2 and Cant 1:3; they joined in 2 Cor 2:14–16, a favorite text for patristic discussion of sacrifice.[10] Once introduced into Christian worship and devotional

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[7] It is interesting to compare the presentation of sense perception and religious knowledge here in the Syriac *Transitus* with modern discussions of the epistemological issues of mystical experience, e.g., William P. Alston, *Perceiving God: The Epistemology of Religious Experience* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).

[8] I am helped above all by Constance Classen, David Howes, and Anthony Synnott, *Aroma: The Cultural History of Smell* (London/New York: Routledge, 1994); Constance Classen, "The Odor of the Other: Olfactory Symbolism and Cultural Categories," *Ethos* 20:2 (June 1992) 133–66; idem, "Sweet Colors, Fragrant Songs: Sensory Models of the Andes and Amazon," *AE* 17 (1990) 722–35; Annick LeGuérer, *Scent: The Essential and Mysterious Power of Smell* (New York: Kodansha International, 1994); Béatrice Caseau, *Euodia: The Use and Meaning of Fragrances in the Ancient World and Their Christianization (100–900 AD)* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1994); and Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

[9] M. Detienne, *The Gardens of Adonis: Spices in Greek Mythology* (trans. J. Lloyd; Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester, 1977); S. Lilja, *The Treatment of Odours in the Poetry of Antiquity* (CHL 49; Helsinki: Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1972); Classen, Howes, and Synnott, *Aroma*; Caseau, *Euodia*.

[10] Ps 141:2, "Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice (RSV)." Cant 1:3, "The scent of your ointments is better than all spices. Your name is ointment poured forth. Therefore have the young maidens loved you (LXX)." 2 Cor 2:14–15, "But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life (RSV)." Cf., e.g., John Chrysostom, *Homily 2 on Timothy* (1 Tim 1:5–7) (Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, ed. Philip Schaff, 1st series, vol. 13; repr. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 412–16.

piety, incense framed the Christian signification of odors whenever they appeared and however they were used, in conduct or in discourse, more than any other religious olfactory indicator (perfumed chrism, the sweet scent of relics, the perfume surrounding saints at prayer, the stench of demons, heretics, and hell). An example of how and why this should be the case may be seen by following the role of incense imagery in the Syriac *Transitus Mariae.*

B. *The Syriac* Transitus Mariae*: Patterns of Relation and Knowledge*

The story of the death or "falling asleep" (*dormitio, koimesis*) and assumption of the Virgin Mary is told in the apocryphal account known as the *Transitus Mariae.*[11] Ancient versions of the *Transitus* (= "passing") survive in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Arabic, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic; the medieval European languages also preserve archaic elements of the story.[12] As a full narrative, however, the earliest extant form of the story survives in Syriac, in a wealthy tangle of manuscripts. The oldest recension of the Syriac *Dormition*—so called because its account of the Assumption, or Mary's removal to heaven after her death, is minimal and lacks the elaborate afterlife described in other versions—was edited from fragments and published by William

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[11] Simon C. Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption de Marie: Histoire des Traditions Anciennes* (Thhist 98; Paris: Beauchesne, 1995); Michel van Esbroeck, *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge: Etudes historiques sur les traditions orientales* (Brookfield, VT/Aldershot, Hampshire: Variorium, 1995). M. Jugie, *La Mort et l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge: Etude Historico-Doctrinale* (Studi e Testi 114; Cittê del Vaticano, 1944) remains classic. Also useful for the liturgical connection discussed here is J. Ledit, *Marie dans la Liturgie de Byzance* (Thhist 39; Paris: Beauchesne, 1976).

[12] See above all Michel van Esbroeck, "Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le X^{e} siècle," *Les actes apocryphes des apôtres: christianisme et monde païen* (ed. François Bovon et al.; Genève: Labor et Fides, 1981) 265–85 [= van Esbroeck, *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge,* Chap. 1]; and Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption,* pt. 1. Primary Greek and Latin texts were edited in Constantinus Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae Mosis, Esdrae, Pauli, Iohannis, item Mariae Dormitio, additis Evangeliorum et Actuum apocryphorum supplementis* (Lipsiae: Herm. Mendelssohn, 1866) 95–136; these were substantially supplemented by the work of Antoine Wenger, *L'Assomption de la T. S. Vierge dans la Tradition Byzantine du VI^{e} au X^{e} Siècle: Études et Documents* (AOCh 5; Paris: Insitut Français d'études Byzantines, 1955).

Wright in 1865; it most likely dates to the late fifth century.[13] Two sixth-century Syriac expansions of the text also survive, the first, a *History of the Virgin Mary in Six Books*, again edited by Wright in 1865,[14] and a second, *History of the Virgin Mary in Five Books*, edited by Agnes Smith Lewis in 1902.[15]

Because the Syriac manuscript tradition for the *Transitus Mariae* is both ancient and abundant, it has received considerable attention by scholars of Marian doctrine and devotion.[16] However, these three recensions carry an historical witness quite apart from questions of Mariology. Through their presentation of incense offerings, they chart in vivid terms the changing role of sacrificial themes in relation to sense perception during late antiquity.[17] The Christian use of incense came

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[13] Ed. and trans. in William Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1865). The manuscripts are also described and discussed in Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, 78–86. Mimouni dates this version to the sixth century, on (unspecified) doctrinal grounds.

[14] Ed. and trans. William Wright, "The Departure of My Lady Mary from This World," *JSL* n.s. 6–7 (London 1865) 6.417–48; 7.110–60. Compare the description and discussion of the manuscripts in Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, 91–101. Mimouni dates it to the second half of the sixth century.

[15] Ed. and trans. in Agnes Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca: The Protoevangelium Jacobi and Transitus Mariae* (StSin 11; London: E. J. Clay and Sons, 1902). See Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, 101–4.

[16] In addition to the works by Jugie, Mimouni, and van Esbroeck noted above in n. 11, see also S. C. Mimouni, "La tradition littéraire syriaque de l'histoire de la dormition et de l'assomption de Marie," *Parole de l'Orient* 15 (1988–89) 143–68. The Syriac *Transitus* plays a key role in tracking the evolution of the feast day of the Assumption: see Alphonse Raes, "Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption en Orient," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 12 (Rome 1946) 262–64; Athanase Renoux, "Le Codex Arménien Jérusalem 121," 2: édition comparée du texte et de deux autres manuscrits, *PatO* 36 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1971) 141–388, esp. 189-92; B. Capelle, "La Fête de la Vierge à Jérusalem au V^{e} siècle," *Le Muséon* 56 (1943) 1–33; Michel van Esbroeck, "Étude comparée des notices byzantines et caucasiennes pour la fête de la Dormition," *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge*, chap. 2; idem, "Le culte de la Vierge de Jérusalem à Constantinople aux 6^{e}–7^{e} siècles," *Revue des Études byzantines* 46 (1988) 181–90 [= van Esbroeck, *Aux origines de la Dormition de la Vierge*, chap. 10]; S. C. Mimouni, "La Fête de la Dormition de Marie en Syrie à l'époque Byzantine," *The Harp* 5 (Kottayam, Kerala: 1992) 157–74.

[17] Van Esbroeck, "Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le X^{e} siècle," at 265–75, proposes a system to classify the huge body of manuscripts surviving in ancient Christian languages for the *Transitus Mariae*. He establishes two basic families signified by their primary literary images, the first by "The palm of the Tree of Life" and the second by "Bethlehem and incense offerings." Syriac texts are among the very earliest witnesses to both and for the second family provide the oldest extant forms. Van Esbroeck points out, 269, that while the first family does not lack instances of sacred

into prominence during the century spanned by these three recensions, as did a notable concern for the religious significance of odors. Indeed, through the pattern of incense offerings, the developing text of the Syriac *Transitus* shifts its story from one with an occasional olfactory image to one displaying a densely textured sensory piety in which the use and perception of odors dominate the narrative. The early Syriac *Dormition* (late 5th cent.) has seven instances of holy fragrance;[18] the subsequent *History in Six Books* has fifteen; the later sixth century *History in Five Books* has forty-two.[19] The developing Syriac *Transitus*

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odors, in the second family incense offerings (as well as divine scents) are continually featured. Van Esbroeck rightly stresses that the second family is a development out of the first, rather than representing a separate Marian tradition, and it is with this sense of continuum that I set up these three recensions for consideration. Although van Esbroeck places all three of these Syriac recensions in the second family, from the olfactory perspective this classification does not hold up. The fifth-century Syriac *Dormition* ed. by Wright (van Esbroeck's S2) is much closer to the first family, with significantly less incense imagery; the primary Greek text here (Vat. Grec. 1982, van Esbroeck's G1) is that edited in Wenger, *L'Assomption de la T. S. Vierge dans la Tradition Byzantine*, 209–41. The sixth-century Syriac *History in Six Books*, also ed. by Wright, is clearly close to the Greek tradition of the second family (van Esbrock's G2), represented by the text edited in Tischendorf, *Apocalypses Apocryphae*, 95–112. The later sixth-century Syriac *History in Five Books* edited by Smith Lewis is notably different in the quality and intensity of its olfactory imagery, as will be seen below.

Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, argues for an entirely different classification system, based on the kind of ending Mary is given in a text. Although his numbering differs from that employed by Van Esbroeck, he also classifies these three Syriac texts together, to the point, in fact, where he dismisses the differences between the *History in Five Books* and the *History in Six Books* as insignificant. From the perspective of olfactory imagery, however, these two differ considerably, as will be seen below. The perfume imagery in Vat. Grec. 1982 is discussed in Frédéric Manns, *Le récit de la Dormition de Marie (Vatican grec 1982): Contribution à l'étude des origines de l'exégèse chrétienne* (Studium Biblicum Franciscanum Collecio Maior 33; Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1989) at 144–53, in terms of the schematic poles of incense (sacrifice) and perfume (divine presence).

[18] By "instance of holy fragrance" I mean any mention of smell, fair or foul, granted religious meaning by the text.

[19] One more Syriac recension is related to Wright's *History in Six Books* and Smith Lewis's *History in Five Books*, found incorporated into another Syriac *History of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, ed. and trans. by E. A. Wallis Budge in his collection *The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ Which the Jews of Tiberias Made to Mock At* (Luzac's Semitic Text and Translation Series, vols. 4 and 5; London: Luzac and Co., 1899). These three histories are closely interrelated; van Esbroeck, "Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le X^{e} siècle," in his chart on 266 and thereafter, essentially treats them as their own group (S 3). When analyzed for olfactory imagery, however, the three show prominent differences. Budge's text (like Wright's *History in Six Books*) has fifteen instances of holy fragrance and in these

tradition thus offers a distinct mapping of a Christian devotional piety in transition. Tracing the fragrance motif as it was articulated in terms of incense offerings in these three recensions casts the changes into sharp relief.[20]

The fifth-century Syriac *Dormition* grants a minor role to fragrance, but one in which we see the contours of incense piety that emerged during that century as its usage became normative. Fragrance occurs in this text from two perspectives: the incense offered on human initiative to the divine and the divine perfume poured forth on the created order in response. In this earliest recension, a movement to and from the human and divine persons is at work through sacred odors.

From the human side of the story, incense is used and identified with prayer; on every occasion but one, the prayer is supplicatory. The incense offering marks both special urgency in the nature of the prayer and unusual efficacy in the prayer's power to elicit divine response. Prayer with incense is thus a heightened form of supplicatory speech. Such is the sense when Mary takes a thurible and incense to pray at the tomb of Christ that her trials with her Jewish persecutors be brought to

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instances contains elements of both the *Histories* edited by Wright and Smith Lewis. Nonetheless, Smith Lewis's recension stands alone for the quality of its olfactory imagery, as will be seen below. I will cite the most important correspondences with Budge in the notes that follow. Both Raes, "Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption en Orient," and van Esbroeck, "Étude comparée des notices byzantines et caucasiennes pour la fête de la Dormition," 9–10, have indicated the antiquity and/or liturgical significance of Smith Lewis's recension over that of Budge. Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, 77, chooses to omit Budge's text from his system on the grounds that it represents a transmission restricted to the East Syrian ("Nestorian") tradition.

[20] One of van Esbroeck's most interesting points is that the manuscript family characterized by continual incense offerings flourished largely in the Monophysite domain of the Christian Orient. He sees its development, along with the celebration of the Feast of the Dormition on August 15, as part of the imperial politics under successive Byzantine regimes of the fifth and sixth centuries that engaged the cult of the Virgin Mary in the efforts to resolve the Christological divisions following from the Council of Chalcedon in 451. In addition to "Les textes littéraires sur l'Assomption avant le X^{e} siècle," see his studies "Étude comparée des notices byzantines et caucasiennes pour la fête de la Dormition" and "Le culte de la Vierge de Jérusalem à Constantinople aux 6^{e}–7^{e} siècles." Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption*, 112–13, plays down the significance of confessional identification of the manuscripts because he does not see consequential differences between the Mariology of the Chalcedonian and dissenting churches. For the imperial involvements in—and manipulations of—the cult of Mary in the fifth and sixth centuries, see Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); and Vasiliki Limberis, *Divine Heiress: The Virgin Mary and the Creation of Christian Constantinople* (New York/London: Routledge, 1994).

an end and her death be soon,[21] again when she prays with a censer burning beside her during the continuation of her ordeals,[22] and again when an invalid prays to Mary while burning incense, for healing by intercession.[23] In each case, the burning incense offers the physical evidence of the prayer's journey heavenward. More than a physical image, however, incense plays a mediatorial role: it is the means by which prayer reaches its destination, and it initiates the hoped for response. Mary offers incense with her prayer, and "the moment that her prayer had gone up to heaven, the angel of the Lord came down to her."[24] The invalid is healed at the moment he offers incense with his prayer to Mary.[25] Incense offered with prayer provides a salvific bridge between suppliant and savior.

In these instances, the use of incense is noted, but the fragrance of incense is not. We might then understand the role of burning to be the key element of the action, transfiguring substance from material to immaterial nature. However, this *Dormition* highlights fragrance in two other episodes where smell is critical to the meaning of the event; these, in turn, reflect back on the episodes of incense offering. First is Mary's reminiscence of the Annunciation. After Gabriel's prophetic greeting, Mary had realized her conception by the Holy Spirit: "a sweet smell (*rîḥâ bsîmâ*) was diffused through the whole house; and the walls of the house too sent forth waves of fragrances (*hrûmê*) through the whole neighborhood." Her immediate response: "And I arose, and set forth incense, and fell on my face, and glorified the name of the grace of our Lord."[26] Spoken words are not the important language in this olfactory dialogue, nor does fragrance function as a metaphor for prayer. In this account, divine presence is activated by and cognitively known through heavenly fragrance. Mary replies with an incense offering that does more than render honor to her Lord, as her humble position would dictate. Fragrance here is the means by which grace is present and the

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[21] Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament,* 19.

[22] Ibid., 31.

[23] Ibid., 36.

[24] Ibid., 19.

[25] Ibid., 36.

[26] Ibid., Syr. text p. [*43–44] my trans.; Wright's trans., 34. As so often, there are interesting pre-Christian parallels. Compare, e.g., the Egyptian Queen Ahmose's conception of Hatshepsut by the god Amun, as discussed in Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many* (trans. John Baines; Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982) 133–35. I am grateful to Stephen Thompson for this reference.

means by which it is actively received and thereby effective. Fragrance accomplishes divine will in the realization of Mary's conception and again as the mechanism for Mary's acquiescence to a divine economy that will be played out in the physical realm. The scents that compose this dialogue are powerful as sacred agents because of their functional meaning in the encounter of human and divine, orchestrated in the text according to the familiar patterns of prayer ritual.

The second incident occurs at the end of the *Dormition,* when Mary's glorified body is transported to Paradise in the midst of a celestial liturgy. We are told, "And a fragrant and sweet odor (*ʾârâ hnyââ wabsîmâ*) went forth from the highest heavens of [the Lord's] glory to all the places of creation."[27] Again, divine action is made known through fragrance. The reader is reminded that smells in this text are sweet because their meaning exceeds the natural course of human experience. For ancient Christians, to initiate fragrance by offering incense or to smell God's pleasure by breathing divine perfume was to participate in a heavenly order through the earthly gateway of human perception. The smells in this text are identified as the smells offered and received in the liturgy, where the Christian approached the divine and received blessing through a process marked by a series of incense offerings and understood it to be punctuated in return by the sanctifying fragrance of God's grace. Smell is a minor element in the overall narrative of this first recension, but it works as the language of divine encounter at the most decisive points of the story.

The second recension of the Syriac *Transitus*, the sixth-century *History in Six Books*, elaborates this earlier *Dormition* with a liturgical imagery to frame and drive the narrative. The story's setting is now a liturgy: the text opens with the entire Christian community summoned to join the ranks of heavenly hosts standing in worship before the glory of the Trinity. Its purpose is now ecclesial: the story records how the monks of Mt. Sinai discovered the ancient books of the Dormition and Assumption, written by James the brother of the Lord for the purpose of instituting three Marian feasts into the church calendar—precursors of, but not related to, the six Marian feasts that came to be set in Byzantine tradition.[28] Finally, the conclusion incorporates a lengthy tour of heaven

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[27] Wright, *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament,* Syr. text [*49] my trans.; Wright's trans., 40.

[28] The three feasts of the Syriac *Transitus*, January 6, May 15, and August 13, were tied to the agrarian cycle. See the discussions in van Esbroeck, "Les textes littéraires

and hell and a Marian apocalypse. Mary now has an afterlife of doctrinal as well as devotional significance.

In keeping with the liturgical elaboration of this text, the narrative occurrences of fragrance have doubled over the earlier *Dormition.* However, the instances are more strictly formulaic, and the Annunciation is no longer an olfactory event.[29] Incense accompanies twelve occasions of prayer—not many, given the number of prayers offered in this text. It is burned honorifically to glorify God and in supplication to beg divine intervention. Its ritual function has not changed from the earlier recension, but its narrative telling is enhanced through lexical and syntactical redundancy; for example, "My Lady Mary said to John, 'Set forth the censer of incense and pray.' And John set forth the censer of incense and prayed."[30] In this fashion, incense is offered by priests in the worshipping congregation past,[31] present,[32] and future.[33] It is offered by Mary,[34] the apostles,[35] and the ranks of the prophets in heaven.[36] Thus incense is offered by the individual, corporate, and celestial bodies of the church. Furthermore, smells mark the geography of the cosmos: here the air of Paradise is suffused with sweet perfume even as Hell exudes stench.[37] The relatively minor narrative shift in the quantity of holy odors marks a qualitative turn in sensibility. In this text (as in the larger culture) olfactory codes define the sanctified community of the faithful internally to one another and externally to creation as a whole. Holy smells restructure the meaning of historical time in relation to eternity and demarcate sacred from profane, salvation from damnation, and redeemed creation from the fallen order.

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sur l'Assomption avant le X^{e} siècle," 274; Raes, "Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption en Orient"; and Mimouni, "La Fête de la Dormition de Marie en Syrie à l'époque Byzantine."

[29] But here the Holy Spirit rather than Mary tells the story of the Annunciation; the olfactory aspect may not have seemed important or appropriate from the changed narrative view. The story is not included in the Transitus portion of Budge's edition of the *History of the Virgin Mary.*

[30] Wright, "The Departure of My Lady Mary from This World," bk. 2, 136.

[31] Ibid., 131–32, 148.

[32] Ibid., 129.

[33] Its usage is mandated for the Marian feasts instituted in this text, ibid., 153.

[34] Ibid., 136, 146.

[35] Ibid., 136, 140–41, 153, 155.

[36] Ibid., 129, 150–51.

[37] Ibid., 156, 158.

The turn in religious sensibility comes full force in the sixth-century *History in Five Books,* significantly related to both previous recensions.[38] Scholars have generally ignored this recension of the *Transitus* on the grounds that it represents a later and "more corrupt" form of the story, by which apparently is meant the still further liturgical expansion of the narrative. Agnes Smith Lewis's 1902 edition has also suffered neglect because of the method she chose to reconstruct the badly damaged text, filling in lacunae from two other manuscripts (one probably later, therefore, in the eyes of some scholars, less reliable), and printing the edition such that the original and reconstructed portions are not easily distinguishable.[39] Yet this text preserves important information related to the celebration of the Dormition feast not found elsewhere.[40] And it is this text that most fully exploits fragrance as a motif and as a device. The reconstructed portions are entirely consistent with this development. One could say we have evidence here that the process of olfactory symbolization continued to play itself out.

In this third recension, the story is told within an ever more complex liturgical frame. The narrative opens with an invocation that the Trinity should bless the worshipping ranks of created order above and below,

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[38] Van Esbroeck, as noted above in n. 17, sees these recensions as closely interrelated. In Smith Lewis's edition, for example, the Annunciation is again an olfactory event.

[39] Mimouni, *Dormition et Assomption,* 91–92 n. 64, and 101–4, judges her harshly, although her own testimony indicates a scrupulous care that he does not acknowledge. In editing her text, which she claimed to be based on the oldest manuscripts of the Syriac, Smith Lewis filled in the lacunae of her primary manuscript by using Wright's 1865 edition of the *History in Six Books* as well as a manuscript of Rendel Harris's, copied in 1857, but which she was certain represented a text as ancient as her own. She claimed that the version included in the *History of the Virgin* edited and translated by Budge was based on later manuscripts and therefore chose not to consult his edition which was edited at the same time that her own work was underway. It is noteworthy that scholarly discussions of the Syriac *Transitus* are generally restricted to the fifth-century *Dormition* edited by Wright in 1865; occasionally, scholars will also mention Wright's sixth-century *History in Six Books.* The Smith Lewis edition of the *History in Five Books* is rarely utilized, although both Raes and van Esbroeck have noted its importance concerning the establishment of the feast of the Dormition on August 15; see below, n. 40. In part, this neglect is due to the problems of her edition as cited here, but the omission seems also due to the agenda of scholars to establish the oldest version of a text, as close to an "original" as possible. This "quest for origins" is unfortunate when it obscures the fluid nature of ancient texts. As seen with the Syriac *Transitus,* textual evolution itself may have important historical information to convey.

[40] Van Esbroeck, "Étude comparée des notices byzantines et caucasiennes pour la fête de la Dormition," 9–10; Raes, "Aux origines de la fête de l'Assomption en Orient."

past and present, arrayed in their full ritual splendor and performing their ritual roles with glory. Later in the story this massive congregation reappears to attend Mary's deathbed with an elaborate service lasting five days and five nights. The three Marian feasts, tied as before to the agrarian cycle, are mandated with extensive liturgical instructions. The celestial liturgy when Mary arrives in Paradise is even more sumptuous than in the *History in Six Books.*

In this text, prayer is generally offered with lavish incense, especially when performed by Mary and the apostles; divine response is most often in the form of heavenly perfume sent forth in exuberant waves. The paths of sacred smells are closely noted: how the incense moves from the censer heavenward through all the celestial regions, and how the divine perfume pours earthward throughout all the world.[41] Fragrance—not the sacrificial offering, not the burning—is now the focus of religious experience, and it is a focus with great might. In this text the Jews make three attempts to murder Mary. The first time, "the odor of the faith (*rîḥâ d-haymanûtâ*) that proceeded from [Mary] the Blessed One smote them, and their minds were troubled";[42] thus the incident came to naught. Twice more, while Mary lay on her deathbed, attempts were made—both foiled by angelic hosts drenching the air with their perfume.[43] In this text, not only does Paradise throb with sweet scent even as Hell reeks of stench, but the celestial liturgy in celebration of Mary's arrival in heaven causes such a commotion that "the bones of the just which were imprisoned within the earth, moved, and a sweet odor (*rîḥâ bsîmâ*) was wafted through all the corners of the world."[44]

So much incense is burned and so much heavenly perfume is poured out in this text that we cannot be surprised when the "odor" of Mary's faith paralyzes a lynch mob; nor indeed, when the apostles' tears at her death turn the dust of the ground to clay and "that clay caused a scent of perfume (*ʿtârâ d-hrûmê*) to exude and the apostles were gladdened by

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[41] E.g., Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca,* 20, 36, 37, 47, 59, 62, 65, 68. While Budge's *History of the Virgin* contains far fewer incidences of holy fragrance than Smith Lewis's *History in Five Books* (15, as opposed to 42 in the latter), a similar perspective on the path of sacred smells can be seen. For example, "Mary went and offered up incense, and prayed, and she saw that the sweet smell ascended into heaven, and that it went in through the door thereof" (Budge, 98–99).

[42] Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca,* 20; Syr. text [*34].

[43] Ibid., 37, 52.

[44] Ibid., 68.

it."[45] How is the reader to distinguish between a piety now practiced through the medium of incense use and the belief that knowledge of divine will is to be perceived and identified through the experience of holy fragrance? How could one distinguish the aroma of human worship from the scent of divine presence?[46]

The Syriac tradition of the *Transitus* more than any other of the surviving versions provides this focused development of the holy fragrance motif. Indeed, incense and its olfactory symbolism were especially pronounced in the spirituality of the late antique Syrian Orient. Christian liturgical use of incense apparently emerged first and then most prominently in the Syrian Orient.[47] As a motif within ascetic spirituality, the Syrian tradition poignantly embodies incense in the holy person's ascetic praxis: the stylite on the pillar is the incense on the altar;[48] the ascetic naked in the wilderness is the ecclesial body in microcosm, the body serving as sanctuary, the mind as altar, tears as the incense on that altar.[49] In Syrian tradition, incense had an early and influential role in

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[45] Ibid., 63; Syr. text p. [*104].

[46] One passage from Budge's *History of the Virgin* is quite different from its counterparts in Wright's and Smith Lewis's recensions and demonstrates exactly this point. As the apostles performed their liturgical service at the house where Mary's body lay in state, the odors of their worship, of her sanctified body, and of the heavenly hosts in attendance were perceived to be commingled: "the people of Bethlehem saw the clouds coming and sprinkling sweet dew over all the house. . . . And the people of Bethlehem saw as it were [the appearance of] the waves of the sea when they break upon the shore, for even thus were the waves of sweet smells and odours which came forth from the upper chamber. And like the rushing water which a full and overflowing spring poureth out in torrents, even so did the odour of sweet scents go forth from the foundations of the upper chamber" (trans. Budge, 134–35).

[47] Ephrem Syrus *Nisibene Hymns* 17.4.4–6, in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Carmina Nisibena I*, ed. and trans. Edmund Beck (CSCO 218–19; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1961); *Hymns on Julian Saba* 1–4, in *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen auf Abraham Kidunaya und Julianos Saba*, ed. and trans. Edmund Beck (CSCO 322–23; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1972); *Apostolic Canons* 3 (cf. S. Gero, "The So-Called Ointment Prayer in the Coptic Version of the Didache: A Re-Evaluation," *HTR* 70 [1977] 67–84, at 76–77); Theodoret *Questions on Exodus* 28.

[48] The Syriac *Life of Simeon the Stylite* (ed. Paul Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum* 4; repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1968) 507–644; a different recension was translated in Robert Doran, *The Lives of Simeon Stylites* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1992); cf. S. A. Harvey, "The Sense of a Stylite: Perspectives on Simeon the Elder," *VC* 42 (1988) 376–94. The incense image is even more elaborately explored subsequently in *La Vie ancienne de St. Syméon Stylite le Jeune 521–592* (2 vols.; ed. and trans. Paul van den Ven, Subsidia Hagiographica 32; Bruxelles: Société des Bollandistes, 1970).

[49] Ps.-Ephrem, "On Hermits and Desert Dwellers," ll. 97–108, 485–96. Ed. Edmund

the sensory aspects of Christian piety. Here we see its influence at work in a manner that illuminates the larger Christian perspective.

Considered apart from the particular developments of Marian doctrine, these three recensions of the Syriac *Transitus Mariae,* closely interrelated as texts, tell the same story of Mary's "passing." A relatively late addition to the body of Christian apocryphal literature, the story presents the salvation drama of the gospels as it will be brought to fulfillment for the human race, in terms that affirm the institutional and doctrinal positions of the post-Nicene church. The story defines Mary's relationship to the apostolic ecclesiastical structure by the gathering of the apostles for her death and to the charismatic roots of the church with the inclusion of Paul among them. In accordance with the Christological concerns of the late fourth and fifth centuries, the story affirms Mary's participation in salvation history as the place where human and divine met in the singular reality of the incarnation. The transport of her body to heaven is the promise which the resurrection bestowed on all believers, here foretold as a glimpse of what awaits the faithful. In this story, the essential boundaries that circumscribe the realms of the human and the divine are literally "passed over" to remake Mary's condition and location in the cosmos, bringing her to the very heart of God's domain. This story holds the whole story of the Church in its narrative.

Across the three earliest Syriac recensions, this same story is told with increasing reliance on the making and experiencing of smells to convey its purpose. As with any writing of this type—anonymous, apocryphal—a number of agendas are at work. Some are overtly tied to political issues, here most prominently the intense Christological debates in which devotion to the Virgin Mary played a major role.[50] Some are more inchoate, operating at a less conscious level (for writer or reader)

Beck, *Des Heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones IV* (CSCO 334–35; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1973); trans. Joseph P. Amar, in Vincent Wimbush, ed., *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 66–80.

[50] The controversy over the title "Theotokos" was a central issue in the clash between Cyril of Alexandria, Nestorius, and their respective supporters. For discussion of the public turmoil (as distinct from the theological debates per se), see Limberis, *Divine Heiress;* Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) esp. 165–70; Averil Cameron, "The Theotokos in Sixth Century Constantinople: A City Finds Its Symbol," *JTS* n.s. 29 (1978) 79–108; Timothy Gregory, *Vox Populi: Popular Opinion and Violence in the Religious Controversies of the Fifth-Century A.D.* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1979).

even while tapping into important currents of cultural change. The role of smell across these three texts indicates such an agenda, in which there is a growing awareness of the potency of sensory experience to carry and to clarify religious meaning. A general stress on the senses may be behind this, but the texts demonstrate appreciation for what can be distinctively conveyed through olfactory encounters. The increasing presence of olfactory imagery in the texts matches and responds to the growth of incense piety in public and private prayer. The common religious life in which the story was received naturally provided the terms of worship or devotion that would clothe its literary form. But it was the imaginative context of story that would explore the activity of incense offering for the possibilities of its spiritual meanings.

We have noted in these texts a shift from incense as a sacrificial offering, with burning as its key element, to incense as a dialogic device, providing an olfactory language that served to bridge the human and divine spheres. Fragrance itself becomes the source and locus of power. This shift draws on the familiar notion of divine presence known and interpreted through fragrance. The pan-Mediterranean association of divinity and heavenly worlds with sweet scents is found everywhere from Homer to *1 Enoch*. Here, however, that concept is employed not as a static attribute of the divine but as a dynamic quality that actively engages human experience. The divine smells sweet, and the course of human lives alters as a result. Fragrance is not a descriptive aspect of the holy but rather an active agent of divine presence, and its activity is specifically in relation to the human offering of scents ritually rendered holy.

The *Transitus* is the story of Mary's (and humanity's) passing across the boundaries of the old dispensation into the new, and it is precisely the uncontainable, boundary-crossing qualities of smell that make it an effective carrier of this message.[51] In the story, smell can be the medium of revelation and agency that operates apart from the more clearly identified experiences of hearing (Christ as Word, the revelation of Scripture) and sight (Christ as Light, the revelation of history). Sacred scents both human and divine flow across their prescribed domains in the course of this story and overflow, mingling with a new intimacy. First at her conception by the Holy Spirit and then at her death, Mary passes over boundaries no person has crossed before her. The boundaries

[51] From an anthropological view, it is this "transgressive," boundary-crossing quality that makes smell a powerful cultural symbol. Cf. Classen, Howes, and Synnott, *Aroma*.

between human and divine are redrawn to be mutually inclusive. Fragrance borne by incense offerings becomes an olfactory icon for Mary's salvific activity, fulfilled by the cycle of her life from the conception of Christ through to her dormition and assumption, an activity enacted for the whole human race. Indeed, thus was her image enshrined for Byzantine tradition in the Akathist verses composed in the tenth century by Joseph the Hymnographer, chanted still in Orthodox Lenten services:

> Hail [Mary], from whom alone there springs the unfading Rose; hail, for thou hast borne the sweetly-smelling Apple. Hail, maiden unwedded, nosegay of the only King and preservation of the world.
> Hail, Lady, treasure-house of purity, raising us from our fall; hail, lily whose sweet scent is known to all the faithful; hail, fragrant incense and precious oil of myrrh.[52]

[52] Here trans. Mother Mary and Archimandrite Kallistos Ware, *The Lenten Triodion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977) 428. See Joseph, *Mariale*, in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* 105: 984–1414, esp. Canon 1, Ode 8 at cols. 989–90; Canon 6, Ode 1 at cols. 1019–20; and for February at cols. 1957–58. The imagery of Mary and incense is also preserved in an unusual twelfth-century wallpainting, combining both Syriac and Coptic elements: Lucy-Anne Hunt, "The Fine Incense of Virginity: A Late Twelfth-century Wallpainting of the Annunciation at the Monastery of the Syrians, Egypt," *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 19 (1995) 182–232.

PSEUDO-ORPHEUS: TRACKING A TRADITION

Carl R. Holladay

One of the most intriguing Jewish texts written in Greek during the Hellenistic-Roman period is the poetic work known as Pseudo-Orpheus.[1] It has been preserved by Christian writers in various forms, beginning with Clement of Alexandria, although Eusebius reports that a version of the poem was quoted by Aristobulus, the Jewish philosopher who flourished in the mid-second century BCE.

It is something of an oversimplification to call it a "poetic work" since this would seem to imply a single composition. To be sure, in some cases it is preserved as a single, unified composition. A short version, consisting of some twenty-one lines, occurs in two works attributed to Pseudo-Justin, dated to the late third or early fourth century, while Eusebius preserves a longer version consisting of some forty-one verses. Accordingly, the poem is sometimes said to have been preserved in a longer and shorter recension. But even this veils the complexity of the textual tradition. Clement quotes some thirty-one lines from the poem, but rather than giving either the longer or shorter form of the poem as a unified composition, he cites scattered quotations. Taken as a whole, his quotations encompass most all of the shorter version found in Pseudo-Justin, but they also contain lines found in Eusebius's longer version.

This obviously raises the question of Clement's relationship to the so-called shorter and longer recension. Since his quotations include lines from the longer recension, does this mean that he has access to it? Or since his quotations also contain similarities with the shorter recension, does this mean that he also knew the poem in its shorter form? Or are his quotations so distinctive as to suggest his dependence on yet another version of the poem, a third recension?

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[1] See my *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors*, vol. IV, *Orphica* (SBL Texts and Translations 40, Pseudepigrapha Series 14; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996)(= *FHJA* 4). The system of verse numbers used below in displaying the recensions is based on the most complete form of the poem, which appears in the Tübingen Theosophy. For a more detailed explanation, see *FHJA* 4.71 n. 1.

As one examines the poem in the various witnesses, one is struck by its fluidity. The long recension is not simply an extended version of the short recension, where verses have been added. Instead, there are substantial differences throughout the poem, ranging from grammatical to material changes. One gets the impression of a floating, poetic tradition with remarkable fluidity, where changes can be made to suit a wide variety of literary or historical settings.

Whether it is a Jewish composition through and through or whether it is a pagan composition that has been reworked and expanded by later Jewish redactors is a disputed question. In either case, the Jewish author(s) is writing in a distinctively Greek genre and has drawn heavily on the Greek epic tradition. The work reflects intimate familiarity with Homer and Hesiod, as well as other parts of the Greek poetic tradition.[2]

What is especially remarkable is that the poem in its various forms retains its basic format: the mythical Greek singer and poet Orpheus instructing his son (or disciple) Musaeus about the one God—transcendent and inscrutable, enthroned in the heavens and presiding over the cosmos. A central feature of the poem is God's elusive presence: for all his mystical insight, even Orpheus is unable to know the God he proclaims. "Even I do not see him," Orpheus laments (v. 21). The aura of mystery is reflected in the description of God: invisible behind the clouds, unseen, yet all-seeing. And the content is reinforced by the form: the opening line is a stock, formulaic address, probably from a mystery initiation rite where the initiates are invited inside to hear the proclamation while the uninitiated are excluded.

Naturally, what piqued the interest of the Jewish community in (Ptolemaic) Alexandria, or perhaps some unknown Alexandrian Jewish scholar, was the poem's focal interest in the "one God" who is "self-generated," and of whom it could be said that "all things are brought

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[2] These affinities were recognized early on, e.g., in L. C. Valckenaer, *Diatribe de Aristobulo Judaeo; philosopho peripatetico Alexandrino* (ed. J. Luzac; Leiden: S. & J. Luchtmans, 1806), esp. in P. Wesseling's essay on the Orphic fragments and Aristobulus, which was printed as an appendix to Valckenaer's work; later, in C. A. Lobeck, *Aglaophamus sive De theologiae mysticae Graecorum causis. Libri tres . . . poetarum Orphicorum dispersas reliquias* (Königsberg: Bornträger Fratres, 1829; reprinted Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1961) 2.364–66, 438–65, and A. Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum historia atque origine: Commentatio* (Bonn: University Press [C. Georgi], 1893–97) esp. pts. 5 and 6, pp. 149–206. Most recently this has been documented thoroughly in C. Riedweg, *Jüdisch-hellenistische Imitation eines orphischen Hieros Logos: Beobachtungen zu OF 245 und 247* (sog. *Testament des Orpheus*) (Classica Monacensia; MSkP 7; Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1993).

forth as the offspring of this one" (v. 10). What this anonymous Jewish author found irresistible was the notion that knowledge of the one God eluded even Orpheus, whose reputation as poetic theologian and religious reformer was well established by the mid-second century BCE. Here was an open invitation to assert that where Orpheus had failed, biblical heroes, most notably Abraham and Moses, had succeeded, and this is precisely what we can see in the poem's redactional history. First Abraham is entered as a competitor in the arena with Orpheus, and he not only runs but wins. Indeed, he is presented as a "unique figure"—the lone exception among ancient thinkers—whose expert knowledge of astronomy enabled him to know the one true God. At a later stage, the poem is modified to present Moses in a similar vein, as the one to whom monotheistic faith was revealed (perhaps uniquely).

That it was a popular poem is seen by the fact that it was quoted by a number of authors in a number of forms over the course of several centuries. What made it so popular is not altogether clear. Texts attributed to Orpheus, of course, had an appeal all their own. Its esoteric, one might say mystical, quality doubtless enhanced its appeal, along with its many features that resonated with popular philosophical piety. But any text in which Orpheus was upstaged by a "Chaldean astrologer" was bound to have even further appeal, especially to Jewish and Christian writers keen to show the priority and therefore superiority of the Jewish biblical tradition over the best of Greek philosophical and poetic traditions.

But its very popularity also helps account for the complexity of its textual tradition. For what we have here is not a single poem preserved in several witnesses, but rather a *fluid* poem preserved in *several* patristic witnesses, each with its own complex textual history. Perhaps this, as much as anything else, has contributed to the confusion surrounding this text, which has fascinated scholars, off and on, for well over two hundred years.

In order to make sense of some of the interpretive problems, it will be helpful to review the basic information pertaining to the poem's textual history.[3]

[3] For a more detailed account, see *FHJA* 4.43–48.

A. *The Patristic Witnesses*

The poem is preserved in the following Christian authors/texts:

1. *Pseudo-Justin (late third–early fourth century)*

The poem is quoted in two pseudonymous works attributed to Justin Martyr. The first of these, *Cohortatio ad Graecos* (= *Coh.*), dated in the second half of the third century, quotes the poem as a single piece, consisting of twenty-one verses. In the second work *De Monarchia* (= *Mon.*), difficult to date but certainly prior to 311–312, the poem is quoted again as a single piece, with a few minor textual variations from *Coh.*, but without verses 1 and 3.

In both works, the piece is attributed to Orpheus and (in *Mon.* explicitly) is cited as proof that he renounced polytheism and accepted belief in the one God. In *Mon.* the poem is said to have been taken from the Orphic tractate Διαθῆκαι.

These two quotations comprise forty verses, representing twenty-one separate lines from the poem. Pseudo-Justin's version, which constitutes what I regard as the "core" poem, focuses primarily on the one God, the transcendent, invisible ruler of the universe, although it also mentions the divine Logos as the infallible guide who leads the earnest inquirer to this God.

2. *Clement of Alexandria (d. ca. 215)*

Whereas Pseudo-Justin quotes the poem as a unified piece, Clement only gives scattered quotations, ranging from single lines to larger sections, all of which occur in the *Protrepticus* and *Stromateis*. In all, Clement quotes thirty-one different verses, some of which are repeated, although not always in the same form.

Clement quotes virtually all of the verses found in Pseudo-Justin, but his ten additional verses include material about a "Chaldean" astrologer, commonly designated the "Abraham section" (vv. 27–31), and portions of the concluding section (vv. 38–40, 43–44).

3. *Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339)*

The poem is quoted in two sections of Eusebius's *Praeparatio Evangelica*. In the first (*P.E.* 13.12.5), it occurs in a quotation that Eusebius attributes to Aristobulus, the Jewish philosopher who flourished in the

mid-second century BCE. It is introduced by Aristobulus as deriving from the "Sacred Discourse" (Ἱερὸς Λόγος) of Orpheus, and it is cited as proof that God both created and controls all things. What follows is a unified piece consisting of forty-one verses.

This "Aristobulus" version (= EusA) includes virtually all of the verses found in Pseudo-Justin and Clement. It also includes Clement's "Abraham" section (vv. 27–31) but enclosed by new verses (vv. 25–26 and 32). But it also has other new material: eleven or so verses not found in Clement or Pseudo-Justin (vv. 2, 9b, 15, 18–20, 41–42, and 44b–46). Especially significant are those that appear to refer to Moses (vv. 41–42) and the Mosaic law (vv. 2, 9b, perhaps 6 and 25), although none of them mentions Moses by name. These "Moses" sections not only introduce new motifs into the poem, but also, along with other redactional changes, possibly alter the way other portions are read. These new references to Moses may preempt the earlier references to Abraham, thereby making Moses the exclusive focus of the poem.

Portions of the poem are also quoted in the section of *Praeparatio Evangelica* where Eusebius reproduces verbatim large portions of Clement's *Stromateis.* In these sections (= EusC), all of the quotations that appear in the long section of *Strom.* (5.14.123–33) are repeated in virtually the same form. This group of Clement quotations does not appreciably alter the Clementine tradition. They are helpful, in some instances, in providing useful text-critical information, and they provide at least one instance (v. 14) where EusA and EusC preserve fundamentally different versions of a verse.

4. *Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444)*

Two sections of the poem are quoted in Cyril's *Contra Iulianum.* From the structural form of the poem in Cyril, it is clear that he depended directly on Pseudo-Justin *Coh.* (e.g., he quotes vv. 1 and 3, which are omitted in *Mon.*). In all, Cyril quotes fifteen separate verses; essentially, he quotes the first ten and last five verses of *Coh.* There is only slight evidence suggesting that Cyril depended on either Clement or Eusebius for his version of the poem.

5. *Theodoret (d. 466)*

Two sections of the poem are also quoted in Theodoret's *Graecorum Affectionum Curatio.* Because Theodoret's section divisions correspond so closely to those in Clement and because he quotes one verse (v. 23)

that is found previously only in Clement, his dependence on Clement is certain. Three of his verses (vv. 10 and 40; also, v. 11a, which is absent in *Strom.* 5.12.78.4), however, agree with EusA over against Clement, suggesting that he at least knew EusA or its underlying recension.

6. *Tübingen Theosophy (fifth century)*

The fullest version of the poem occurs in a collection of oracles stemming from a fifth-century work entitled Θεοσοφία. Since these oracles are preserved in the sixteenth-century manuscript Tubingensis, they (as well as the larger work from which they derive) have come to be called the Tübingen Theosophy, or some variation thereof. Composed by an unknown author, this work contains a section of miscellaneous religious-philosophical, mostly oracular, texts whose aim was to show the harmony between the best of pagan wisdom and the Jewish-Christian tradition, specifically monotheism and the doctrine of the Trinity. Included among them is a version of the Pseudo-Orphic poem with forty-six verses introduced by a paragraph directly attributing the work to Orpheus but also noting his conversion from polytheism to monotheism and the wisdom of the Chaldeans.

Unlike previous witnesses that omit at least some verses found in all other witnesses, the Theosophia Tubingensis (= TTu) omits no material from the other witnesses; instead, it is a comprehensive compilation of all previous verses. It even includes a new verse (v. 13), which is actually a variation of a verse that occurs earlier in Pseudo-Justin (v. 21). The text reflects clear conflationary tendencies, sometimes combining in a single verse readings from previous patristic witnesses, thus producing an entirely new form of the verse. EusA has served as the primary source for TTu since many of their readings agree. However, there are some instances which demonstrate TTu's direct dependence on Pseudo-Justin (v. 24) and probably Clement (v. 13). There is no clear indication that TTu knows the version of the poem in Cyril and Theodoret.

B. *Testimony of Theophilus of Antioch*

Orpheus is mentioned briefly by Theophilus of Antioch in *Ad Autolycum*, dated circa 180 CE. In book 3 §2, Theophilus lists numerous Greek writers from Homer onward, briefly characterizing "their useless and godless notions." Included among them is Orpheus, who at the end

of his life is said to have rejected the 365 gods whom he had earlier propounded. He is also said to have written in his *Testaments* that he professed belief in the one God. The similarity between this brief testimony and the introductory section to the poem in *Mon.* suggests either that one directly depended on the other or that both witnesses drew on a common tradition.

C. *The Recensions*

At some point, every interpreter of the poem must confront its extremely complicated textual history. As one might imagine, with so many different forms of the poem quoted by over a half dozen different witnesses, numerous theories of recensional history have emerged over the last two hundred years or so, each with its own set of problems. Without rehearsing that long and complicated history here, let me summarize my position, while noting some of the other options.[4]

In my reconstruction of the poem's recensional history, I basically follow Nikolaus Walter, who treated the poem in his dissertation, *Der Thoraausleger Aristobulos,* which was completed under G. Delling in the early 1960s and published in 1964.[5] The results of this earlier work have been made available in his translation and annotations in *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* (Bd. 4, Lfg. 3, 1983).[6] Though heavily influenced by earlier scholars, such as Anton Elter (1893–97), Walter developed a more refined position that has been widely influential on subsequent scholarship. Alternative theories have been developed by Michael LaFargue, who treats the text in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha,*[7] and most recently by Christoph Riedweg, in a 1993 monograph devoted exclusively to this text.[8]

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[4] For a review of the recensional history, see *FHJA* 4.48–67.

[5] N. Walter, *Der Thoraausleger Aristobulos: Untersuchungen zu seinen Fragmenten und pseudepigraphischen Resten der jüdisch-hellenistischen Literatur* (TU 86; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964).

[6] N. Walter, "Pseudepigraphische jüdisch-hellenistische Dichtung: Pseudo-Phokylides, Pseudo-Orpheus, Gefälschte Verse auf Namen griechischer Dichter," in *JSHRZ,* Bd. 4, "Poetische Schriften," Lfg. 3 (ed. W. G. Kümmel et al.; Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1983).

[7] M. LaFargue, "Orphica," in *OTP* 2.795–801; also, "The Jewish Orpheus," *SBL 1978 Seminar Papers* (SBLSP 14; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978) 2.137–43.

[8] See note 2 above.

1. *Recension A*

1 I will speak to those to whom it is permitted; shut the doors, you uninitiated,
3 All of you alike. But you, O Musaeus, child of the light-bearing Moon,
4 Listen! For I am about to proclaim the truth. Let not the former
5 Imaginings of your heart deprive you of the blessed life.
6 But look to the divine Logos, and adhere to it,
7 Letting it guide your heart's deepest thoughts. And walk unwaveringly
8 Upon the path, looking only to the master of the universe.
10 He is one, self-generated; all things are brought forth as the offspring of this one;
11 And among them he himself is superior, and no one among
12 Mortals sees him, though he indeed sees everyone.
14 And from good does he give mortals evil—
16 Both chilling war and tearful sufferings.
17 And there is no other apart from this great king.
21 But I do not see him; for around him a cloud has been fixed.
22 For all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes,
24 Too weak to see Zeus the ruler of all things.
33 For he is firmly established in the bronze heaven
34 On a golden throne, and he stands with the earth at his feet.
35 And he stretches out his right hand all the way
36 To the ocean's edge; for around him tremble distant mountains
37 And rivers, as well as the depths of the hoary, blue sea.

In the first two verses (1 and 3a), we encounter formulaic language that is widely used in various settings to introduce esoteric religious-philosophical instruction.[9] Riedweg convincingly locates the formula within the cultic setting of Hellenistic mystery initiation rites.[10]

Assured by Orpheus that the forthcoming revelation is true, Musaeus is urged not to be diverted by the "former imaginings" of his heart. These previous forms of intellectual speculation are bound to lead him astray. Instead, he must "look to the divine Logos" (λόγον θεῖον) for intellectual and spiritual guidance. Nothing requires that the Logos here be understood in a distinctively Stoic sense. Even so, the function of the

[9] See references in *FHJA* 4.154–56.
[10] Riedweg, *Imitation*, 50–51.

Logos is to direct the mind towards "the master of the universe" (κόσμοιο ἄνακτα, v. 8).

At this point, the central theme of the poem emerges: the one God, self-begotten, the one through whom all things originate (v. 10). As the parent of all, God presides over all things: "among them he is superior" (ἐν δ' αὐτοῖς αὐτὸς περιγίνεται, v. 11). His superior vantage point renders him invisible yet gives him an all-seeing eye (vv. 11–12).

In verses 14 and 16, God is portrayed unequivocally as the source of evil (κακόν)—"from good does he give mortals evil—both chilling war and tearful sufferings" (Οὗτος δ' ἐξ ἀγαθοῖο κακὸν θνητοῖσι δίδωσι | Καὶ πόλεμον κρυόεντα καὶ ἄλγεα δακρυόεντα). Here, of course, the poem sides with both the Homeric and biblical tradition, both of which present God as the one who bestows upon mortals both blessings and curses, life and death, good and evil.[11]

God is then said to be without peer: "there is no other apart from this great king" (v. 17). Riedweg regards this assertion as a sure sign of the author's Jewishness, insisting that such a claim is inconceivable on the lips of a non-Jewish Greek during the Hellenistic period.[12]

Even Orpheus is unable to see God, who lives enshrouded in a cloudy mist (v. 21). The vision of mortals is limited: "all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes" (v. 22). Human eyes are simply "too weak" to see Zeus, the cosmic ruler, who is firmly established in the bronze heaven and seated on his golden throne. Finally, Musaeus is reminded of Zeus's awesome power to make mountains, rivers, and seas tremble.

One of the most remarkable features of Recension A is how thoroughly steeped it is in the language of epic poetry.[13] Not only is the poem well executed poetically, it is also replete with images drawn from both Homer and Hesiod, as well as other Greek poets.[14] This careful use

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[11] See *FHJA* 4.162–64.

[12] Riedweg, *Imitation*, 61–62.

[13] As noted above (n. 2), Riedweg provides a detailed analysis of the poem's stylistic features. He notes epic vocabulary and constructions, and his analysis is amply illustrated with references from the epic tradition, esp. Homer and Hesiod. I have included these in the commentary on the recensions in *FHJA* 4.

[14] In terms of poetic composition, Recension A exhibits very few problems; in fact, it reflects considerable sophistication. This is in contrast to the later recensions, esp. Rescension C, which do not scan as well. All indications are that subsequent editors were not as skilled in poetic composition. If Riedweg is correct in his claim that Recension A was composed by a Jewish author near the end of the third century BCE, this would suggest an impressive level of acquaintance with Greek literary models at quite an early stage. On the level of poetic sophistication, see Riedweg, *Imitation*, 64–73,

of archaic language adds authenticity by projecting the reader into the remote world of Orpheus. Also striking is how deftly philosophical-religious images and motifs are deployed to depict the one, inscrutable, transcendent God and a corresponding aura of mysterious revelation.

This "short form" of the poem exhibits a coherent structure: the initial formula effectively addresses Musaeus and singles him out as the recipient of seriously important truths. With the "divine Logos" as his guide, he is urged to concentrate his attention on God, who is described with a string of well-chosen epithets: "master of the universe," who is "one," "self-begotten," the source of all created beings; invisible, yet all-seeing; the one to whom human ills, such as war and suffering, are finally attributable. As cosmic ruler, he is without peer, and his heavenly presence is masked by a cloudy mist. From his golden throne situated within a bronze heaven, he presides over the cosmos. Yet he is not so far removed that he cannot send shivers throughout the natural order.

A consistent view of God emerges: the one, transcendent God; creator and cosmic ruler; distant, thus inscrutable; yet not completely detached from human affairs, since he sees all and is even the source of the ills humans must endure.

One question worth posing at this juncture is whether this "short form" of the poem is Jewish. In the standard collection of Orphic fragments (O. Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta*), it is grouped with other Jewish pseudonymous texts, primarily because the imagery of the enthroned Zeus in verses 33–36 was thought to reflect biblical influence from such passages as Isa 66:1 and LXX Ps 71:8 and 88:26.[15] As already noted, Riedweg thinks verse 17 is a telltale sign of Jewish authorship: "im Munde eines nichtjüdischen Griechen unvorstellbar."[16] For him this assertion goes well beyond pagan affirmations of God's oneness and is much more closely aligned with the radical monotheism of such biblical texts as Exod 20:3, Deut 32:39, and Isa 44:6.

I do not find anything distinctively Jewish here (and here I side with Wobbermin, Goodenough, and Bickerman, among others).[17] The imagery

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[15] O. Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1922; reprint, 1963) esp. 255–66 (sec. 6, Διαθῆκαι, frgs. 245–47).

[16] Riedweg, *Imitation*, 61.

[17] G. Wobbermin, *Religionsgeschichtliche Studien zur Frage der Beeinflussung des Urchristentums durch das antike Mysterienwesen* (Berlin: E. Ebering, 1896) 130–37 (in *FHJA* 4.88 n. 109, the sentence should read: "Wobbermin, *Studien*, 135–37, detects no documentable Jewish influence in Recension A, adducing pagan parallels for the

of the "bronze heaven" and Zeus's "golden throne" is Homeric.[18] Zeus "standing with the earth at his feet" certainly recalls the image of Isa 66:1, where the earth is depicted as God's footstool. Yet, there are close, though not exact, Homeric parallels for these images.[19] I am not at all convinced that verse 17 is an assertion of radical monotheism. Instead, I take it to mean that "there is no other cosmic ruler apart from this great king."

Other features of the poem might be problematic for a Jewish author, although not necessarily so, for example, the mention of Zeus in verse 24 and the ascription of evil to God in verses 14 and 16.

2. *Recension B*[20]

1 I will speak to those to whom it is permitted; shut the doors, you uninitiated,
3 All of you alike. But you, O Musaeus, child of the light-bearing Moon,
4 Listen! For I am about to proclaim the truth. Let not the former
5 Imaginings of your heart deprive you of the blessed life.
6 But look to the divine Logos, and adhere to it,
7 Letting it guide your heart's deepest thoughts. And walk unwaveringly
8 Upon the path, looking only to the master of the universe,
9 *The immortal one. <An ancient saying sheds light concerning this one.>*
10 He is one, **self-complete,** and all things **are by nature** the offspring of this one;
11 And among them he himself **circulates,** and no one among

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imagery in vv. 33–34, 36–37."); E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* (13 vols.; New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1953–68) 9.97; E. Bickerman, *The Jews in the Greek Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988) 225–26. See *FHJA* 4.67, 88 n. 109.

[18] For bronze heaven, cf. Homer *Il.* 17.425; also *Il.* 5.504 and *Od.* 3.2; for golden throne, cf. Homer *Il.* 8.442. See *FHJA* 4.169–71.

[19] See discussion in *FHJA* 4.169–71.

[20] In the following discussion, Recensions B, C, and D are printed in a form that displays the various redactional changes. Italicized material indicates new material not found in a previous recension. Bold type indicates verbal changes made to previous material. Square brackets indicate lines from previous recensions that have dropped out. Angle brackets enclose material supplied from another recension. The recensions are similarly printed in both Greek and English in *FHJA* 4. In my presentation here, I have made some minor corrections to *FHJA* 4; e.g., verse 23 should be italicized.

12 Mortals sees him, though he indeed sees everyone.
14 And **he himself** from good **brings forth** evil for mortals—
16 Both chilling war and tearful sufferings.
17 And there is no other apart from this great king.
21 But I do not see him; for around him a cloud has been fixed.
22 For all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes,
23 *Too small, since they are {implants} set within flesh and bones,*
24 [ ]
27 *Except a certain person, a unique figure, by descent an offshoot*
28 *Of the Chaldean race; for he was expert in following the course of the sun*
29 *And the movements of the spheres around the earth, as it rotates*
30 *In a circle regularly, all on their respective axes.*
31 *And with wind, he creates currents around both air and stream.*
33 **And he himself on the other hand** is firmly established **hereafter over the vast** heaven
34 On a golden throne, and **earth stands under his feet.**
35 And he stretches out his right hand **around the extremities**
36 Of the ocean; **and the base of the mountains trembles furiously from within**
37 [ ]
38 *And it is not possible to endure his mighty force. But in every way*
39 *He himself is heavenly, and on earth brings all things to completion,*
40 *Since he controls their beginning, as well as their middle and end.*
43 *For me to say anything other than this is not permissible for you—and in fact I shudder*
44 *At the very thought. From on high he rules <over everything in order>.*

In Recension B, I have taken the thirty-one verses that occur in the scattered quotations of Clement and arranged them as a single piece.[21] In doing so, I have used Recension A as a guide. The ordering of Clement's verses presents few problems because even when he quotes only a few verses he usually does so in the same order that they occur in Pseudo-Justin.

At the outset, several things are worth noting:

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[21] Riedweg, *Imitation*, 14–15, strongly contests the use of the Clement material to construct a separate recension. See *FHJA* 4.54–55.

(1) Two verses from Recension A are absent: verse 24, which mentions "Zeus the ruler of all things," and verse 37, which is the final verse of Recension A. Both are omitted to make way for editorial additions. In the first instance, after verse 22, "For all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes," verse 23 is supplied as a new sequel: "too small (i.e., mortal pupils), since they are set within flesh and bones." Thus, in Recension B verse 23 replaces verse 24 of Recension A as the sequel to verse 22. In the second instance, verse 37, which mentions the rivers and the sea, drops out and gives way to a new conclusion that continues the theme of God's earthquaking power.

(2) Before noting the two sections that are added, I should first note some of the redactional changes in verses that are retained.

(a) In verse 10, the one God is now said to be "self-complete" (αὐτοτελής) instead of "self-generated" (αὐτογενής) and the form of the verb that occurs at the end of the Greek verse is also changed: "All things are brought forth (τέτυκται) as the offspring of this one" becomes "All things are by nature (πέφυκεν) the offspring of this one."

(b) In verse 11, God is no longer presented as "superior to" (περιγίνεται) the things he creates; instead, he is now presented as "circulating among them" (περινίσσεται). Naturally, this has the effect of bringing God much closer to his creatures and the created order, and this may well represent a Stoicizing move.

(c) In verse 14 there are two word changes, the latter apparently more significant. In Recension A the verb is "gives" (δίδωσι), while in Recension B it is "brings forth" (φυτεύει). But even with this slight change, Recension B still presents God as the source of evil.

(d) Some of the other redactional changes in verses 33–36 relate to the newly inserted material.

(3) Verses 27–31 constitute the first major insertion. Here, one who is "by descent an offshoot of the Chaldean race" (ἀπορρὼξ φύλου ἄνωθεν Χαλδαίων, vv. 27–28) is introduced. He is said to be a "unique figure" (μουνογενής) with special expertise in astronomy: "expert in following the course of the sun and the movements of the spheres around the earth." Even though Abraham is not named, scholars generally agree that he is the referent in these verses since his image as astrologer is a widely documented motif among Jewish texts in the Hellenistic period.[22]

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[22] Cf. Philo *Virt.* 39 §212; *Abr.* 15 §§69–71; Josephus *Ant.* 1.7.2 §158. See *FHJA* 4.182. Also, cf. Pseudo-Eupolemus frg. 1.3, and discussion in *FHJA* 1.180–81 n. 12. In

As noted earlier, the Jewish redactor's logic is unmistakable: Orpheus confesses (v. 21) that even he is unable to see God; enshrouded in a cloudy mist, God remains hidden from every human eye. But, there was one exception: a Chaldean, thoroughly versed in astronomy—the movements of the sun and other heavenly bodies. If a Stoic understanding of natural revelation informs this change, this redaction continues the viewpoint expressed in verse 11: God not only "circulates" among his creatures but also can be known through the natural order.

But if the beginning of this section is relatively smooth, editorially speaking, the ending is less so. The Chaldean figure, presumably Abraham, is clearly the subject in verses 27–30, but does he remain the subject of verse 31? Or, does the subject revert to God? There are several textual problems at this point. I have retained the dative form "with wind" (πνεύματι), although some scholars read the accusative form (πνεύματα) and understand "winds" as the subject of the verb (ἡνιοχεῖ) which I have here rendered "creates." Read this way, the verse is rendered, "(and he was expert in how) the winds direct their course around the air and stream."[23] In this case, Abraham would clearly be the subject of verse 31.

The interpretive crux created by this uneven seam is quite obvious: if Abraham, who is the subject of verses 27–30, continues to be the subject of verse 31, then the wind in some sense could be seen at his disposal as he "creates currents around both air and stream." It has also been suggested that Abraham should be seen as the subject of verses 33–40. Accordingly, these verses are read as depicting the heavenly enthronement of Abraham. Thus, according to this interpretation, the heavenly status and cosmic reign ascribed to Zeus in Recension A are now transferred to Abraham, "the offshoot of the Chaldean race."

This is the line of interpretation adopted by LaFargue in his treatment of the poem in Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*.[24] Thus he renders these verses as follows: "He (i.e., Abraham, or possibly Moses) rides in spirit through the air and through the water | of the stream. A comet makes manifest these events—he had a mighty birth."[25]

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his introductory comments to this passage in *Strom.* 5.14.123.2, Clement mentions that the referent might be either Abraham or Isaac. No doubt he entertains Isaac as a possible referent because μουνογενής was often used with reference to an only child. Cf. Josephus *Ant.* 1.31.1 §222; Heb 11:17. See *FHJA* 4.181–82, comments on v. 27.

[23] See *FHJA* 4.183–84.

[24] See note 7 above.

[25] LaFargue, *OTP* 2.799.

According to LaFargue, the first verse is "a description of a heavenly ascent," while the following verse [v. 32 of Recension C; see below] is taken to refer to a comet which is understood to be "a heavenly portent signaling its cosmic importance." The subsequent verses depicting heavenly enthronement, according to LaFargue, "may be a description of the Chaldean's apotheosis or of his divine vision."[26]

I read it differently. To be sure, Abraham, "the offshoot of the Chaldean race," is the subject of verses 27–30. But at verse 31, the subject reverts to God, who was last mentioned in verses 21–22. The Jewish redactor signals this shift back to God as subject by altering the beginning of verse 33. The effect of the new phrase "on the other hand" (δ' αὖ) is to signal to the reader that the subject now reverts to God and that the heavenly enthronement depicted in verses 33–36 is God's, not Abraham's.[27]

(4) The other significant addition, verses 38–40, 43–44, as noted earlier, is achieved by omitting verse 37 of Recension A and supplying a conclusion reiterating the theme of God's mighty power and continuing the portrait of his heavenly enthronement. One remarkable new element is the mention in verse 40 of the "beginning, middle, and end" formula, which frequently occurs in Hellenistic and Orphic texts with reference to God.[28] Its form in the MS tradition of Recension B is slightly unusual—the last two elements appear in the plural (καὶ μέσων ἠδὲ τελείων).[29] It is difficult to know how to render this phrase—"means and ends," perhaps? For this reason, the editorial tradition usually emends it to give singular forms (καὶ μέσσην ἠδὲ τελευτήν), and I have adopted the editorial emendation at this point and translated it "middle and end." A more conventional form of the formula appears in the textual tradition of the subsequent recensions.

Another remarkable feature of this new conclusion is the reiteration of the theme expressed in the opening formula (vv. 1 and 3): esoteric revelation reserved for initiates. As such, verses 43–44 constitute an *inclusio*. Orpheus is limited in what he can reveal. So overpowering are the effects of this esoteric knowledge that Orpheus trembles when he thinks about it. With this new conclusion, combined with the addition of the "Abraham section" in verses 27–31, the Jewish redactor effectively

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[26] LaFargue, *OTP* 2.799 n. k and 2.800 n. l.

[27] See discussion in *FHJA* 4.186.

[28] See *FHJA* 4.190–92.

[29] For a schematic presentation of the textual tradition, see *FHJA* 4.265.

underscores the sanctity of the divine knowledge to which Abraham was made privy.

3. *Recension C*

I will speak to those to whom it is permitted; shut the doors, you uninitiated,
Since you flee the ordinances of the just, God having laid them down
For all at once. But you, O Musaeus, child of the light-bearing Moon,
Listen! For I **speak** the truth. Let not the former
Imaginings of your heart deprive you of the blessed life,
But look to the divine Logos, and adhere to it,
Letting it guide your heart's deepest thoughts; and walk unwaveringly
Upon the path, looking only to the **molder** of the universe,
The immortal one. *An ancient saying sheds light concerning this one*:
He is one, **complete in himself, and all things are completed by him,**
But among them he himself circulates, and him no one among
Mortals sees **with the soul, but he is seen with the mind.**
And he himself **out of good things does not enjoin evil on mortal**
Men; but grace and hatred accompany him,
As well as war, plague, and tearful sufferings.
And there is no other. **And you would easily understand all things,**
If only you could see him; but until then, here on earth,
My child, I will show you, when I see his
Footprints and the strong hand of the mighty God.
But I do not see him; for around him a cloud has been fixed
[ ]
[ ]
Remaining in my way; and it stands tenfold for other men.
For no one among mortals could see the ruler of men,
Except a certain person, a unique figure, by descent an offshoot
Of the Chaldean race; for he was expert in following the course of the sun
And the **movement** of the spheres around the earth, as it rotates
In a circle regularly, all on their respective axes.

31 **And the winds** he drives around both air and stream
32 *Of water. And he brings forth a flame of mighty fire.*
33 He **indeed** is firmly established **hereafter** over the vast heaven
34 On a golden throne, and earth stands under his feet.
35 And he stretches out his right hand upon the extremities
36 Of the ocean; and the mountain base trembles from within **with rage**
38 And it is not possible to endure his mighty force. But **in every way**
39 He himself is heavenly, and on earth brings all things to completion,
40 Since he controls their beginning, as well as their **middle** and end,
41 *As a word of the ancients, as one born in the undergrowth proclaimed,*
42 *Having received God's teaching in statements on the two-tablet law.*
43 **Now** to say anything other than this is not allowed, **indeed** I shudder
44 At the very thought; from on high he rules *over everything in order.*
45 *O child, be near to him in your thoughts,*
46 *And do not abandon this divine message, but rather preserve it in your heart.*

As noted earlier, Eusebius preserves a version of the poem that occurs in a section of material quoted from Aristobulus. This single composition consisting of forty-one verses is represented here as Recension C.

Compared with Recension B, it exhibits several remarkable features:

(1) First, verses 22 and 23, which mention the limitations of human vision (mortal pupils), are absent. The critically important verse 21, where Orpheus confesses his inability to see God, is retained. As can be seen, however, the omission of verses 22 and 23 makes way for two new verses (vv. 25 and 26), which continue the theme of the obscuring cloud around Zeus. Thus Orpheus here says that the obscuring cloud remains fixed around Zeus. It still blocks his vision, to be sure, but for others it is even more of an obstacle: ten times thicker (δεκάπτυχον). Verse 26 serves as a new line introducing the "Chaldean section": with this tenfold cloud surrounding Zeus, "no one among mortals could see the ruler of men," except, of course, the Chaldean. Verses 27–31 remain virtually the same as in Recension B, although a new verse (v. 32) is introduced. In verse 31 I read the accusative form of "winds" (πνεύματα), which are said to be driven (by God) around air and stream(s) of water. The motif of the "flame of mighty fire" (πυρὸς σέλας

ἰφιγενήτου) may very well recall the image of Zeus's thunderbolts, a common feature in depictions of Zeus. (This is the phrase that LaFargue renders "A comet makes manifest these events—he had a mighty birth."[30])

(2) Perhaps the most distinctive difference between Recension C and Recension B is the newly added verses that are scattered throughout the poem.

(a) Doubtless the most significant additions are verses 41 and 42. Verse 40 gives a slightly modified version of the "beginning, middle, and end" formula. As noted earlier, I take God to be the subject of verses 31–39. In verses 39–40 God is said to be powerful enough to bring all things on earth to completion because he controls the "beginning, middle, and end" of all things. The newly added verses (vv. 41–42) further reinforce this claim by locating its source in ancient, divine revelation. God's sovereignty was revealed in "a word of the ancients" (λόγος ἀρχαίων) and proclaimed by "one born in the undergrowth" (ὑλογενής) who "received God's teaching in statements on the two-tablet law" (κατὰ δίπλακα θεσμόν).

In keeping with the esoteric tone of the poem, the language here is cryptic and very allusive, giving rise to various interpretations. Though the referent of the highly unusual form ὑλογενής is disputed (some editors read ὑδογενής), Moses seems the most likely candidate.[31] Similarly, the "two-tablet law," another very ambiguous phrase, has been variously construed but probably refers to the Decalogue (cf. Exod 31:18; also 34:1, 29).[32]

So construed, verses 41 and 42 introduce Moses and the Torah as indispensable sources of divine revelation for learning about God's sovereignty.

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[30] LaFargue, *OTP* 2.799.

[31] Scaliger, followed by Mras, emends the form to ὑδογενής, "born in water," which would recall the etymology "one born from the water" mentioned in Philo *Vit. Mos.* 1.4 §17. Walter, *JSHRZ* (4, 3) 242, understands ὑλογενής as a compound of ὕλη, "matter," and γενής, thus "born of matter." As such, the term underscores the humanity of Moses as a way of balancing the remarkable claims made about him in the preceding verses. See *FHJA* 4.215–16.

[32] G. Giraudet, "ΥΛΟΓΕΝΗΣ," *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 24 (1911) 287–90, takes ὑλογενής as a reference to Adam, "one born of the earth," citing similar language in Josephus *Ant.* 1.2.3 §67 and *Jub.* 8:1–4. Accordingly, the δίπλακα θεσμόν is to be understood not as a reference to the "two-tablet (Mosaic) law," but to the tradition of two pillars on which were recorded Adam's predictions of a twofold destruction of the universe—one by fire, another by flood (cf. Josephus *Ant.* 1.2.3 §70). See *FHJA* 4.182.

(b) If this way of reading verses 41 and 42 is correct, then the addition of verse 2 and the resulting change at the beginning of verse 3 can be understood in a more precise way. The first part of the initiatory formula from verse 1 is retained. As before, outsiders—the uninitiates—are excluded, but now verse 2 defines the basis of their exclusion. They are no longer excluded because they are morally or ritually impure; now they have fled "the ordinances of the just" (δικαίων θεσμούς) which are said to have been "laid down" by God "for all at once" (θείοιο τιθέντος πᾶσιν ὁμοῦ). Presumably this last phrase implies a universally applicable revelation. If this language is understood to refer to the Mosaic legislation, the uninitiates would appear to be presented as rebels against the law given at Sinai now understood to apply to every human being.

One interpretive question that arises at this point is whether the poem, with these "Mosaic additions" (verses 41–42 and verses 2–3a), presents both Abraham and Moses as recipients of divine revelation or whether these additions have the effect of preempting the Abrahamic image. There are, after all, good grounds for taking the reference to the "Chaldean" in verses 27–31 as a reference to Moses (e.g., Philo, in *Vit. Mos.* 1.2 §5, refers to Moses as the "Chaldean").[33] Thus it is entirely possible to read Recension C in such a way that Moses, and the Mosaic legislation, are its single focus and that Abraham is not in view at all. Either way, a Jewish figure is presented as doing what Orpheus is unable to do: see God and thereby come to true knowledge of God.

(c) Several other changes occur in Recension C but none of them more intriguing than verse 14. As noted earlier, Recension B retained the original form of the verse where evil is attributed to God. Here, however, this claim is overturned: "And he himself out of good things does not enjoin evil on mortal men; but grace and hatred accompany him" (Αὐτὸς δ' ἐξ ἀγαθῶν θνητοῖς κακὸν οὐκ ἐπιτέλλει | Ἀνθρώποις· αὐτῷ δὲ χάρις καὶ μῖσος ὀπηδεῖ).

As the textual tradition makes clear, the Jewish redactor of Recension C was not the first to object to the earlier form of the verse. In one manuscript of Pseudo-Justin, "evil" (κακόν) is changed to "mind"

[33] The TTu scholium also identifies the Chaldean here as Moses, although the paragraph introducing this section characterizes the poem as praising "the ancient wisdom of the Chaldeans, especially that of Abraham." See *FHJA* 4.182.

(νοῦν) as one way of solving the problem: "God out of good gives to mortals intelligence. . . ."[34]

In the earlier form, verses 14 and 16 stand well within the Homeric tradition, where God is understood as the one who afflicts humankind with ills or as the giver of both good and evil. The Homeric view is captured especially well in the moral allegory where Zeus is portrayed as having two jars, one from which he dispenses ills, the other blessings (or, according to one tradition, three jars, two filled with evil gifts, the other with blessings).[35] The Homeric view is also well represented among other poets, including Theognis, Mimnermus, Pindar, Aeschylus, and Menander.[36] In Hesiod, even though the gods are "givers of good things," both good and evil are under their aegis.[37] They can afflict humans with various ills, such as poverty, especially as retribution for wrongdoing.[38]

This view, however, is sharply criticized by Plato in the *Republic*, when he insists that God, being only good, cannot be the source of evil: "for the good we must assume no other cause than God, but the cause of evil we must look for in other things and not in God" (379C). Citing Homer's allegory of the jars of Zeus as erroneous poetic folly, Plato rejects the saying (not found in Homer) that "Zeus is dispenser alike of good and of evil to mortals."[39]

Among the Stoics, Chrysippus is said to have sided with Hesiod's judgment that Zeus sends calamities upon mortals, though insisting that gods use such events to punish the wicked, thereby providing a lesson for everybody else.[40]

The Jewish tradition reflects a similar pattern. Like the Homeric tradition, the Bible presents Yahweh as the source of both good and evil (e.g., Deut 32:29; Isa 45:7; Amos 3:6b; Job 2:10). However, the biblical theme is played out in various ways within the Jewish tradition. In the *Sibylline Oracles* (frg. 1.32–35) various natural disasters, such as earthquakes and famines, are attributed to the one God but in order to make the theological point that God exercises universal control of nature. The Hesiodic position is echoed in the *Sib. Or.* frg. 3.16–20,

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[34] For a schematic presentation of the textual evidence, see *FHJA* 4.251.

[35] *Il.* 24.525–33. For further discussion, see *FHJA* 4.162–64.

[36] See references in *FHJA* 4.163.

[37] *Op.* 667–69; *Th.* 218–20, 900, 905.

[38] *Op.* 213–47, 638, 717–18.

[39] Similarly, Plato *Tim.* 29E–30A. See *FHJA* 4.163.

[40] Plutarch *De Stoic. repugn.* 1040B–C; cf. 1048E–F; 1049A–B; 1049D–E; 1050C–D.

which reflects traditional theology of retribution: God rewards the good and punishes the evil. In *Sib. Or.* 3.601–7, God inflicts evil on all mortals but as punishment for worshipping idols.[41]

The Platonic critique of the Homeric view has its counterpart in *Epistle of Aristeas* 205 (cf. 231), but especially in Philo, who consistently distances God from evil in any form.[42]

As Riedweg suggests, the redactional change in Recension C may very well represent the tradition of philosophic critique found in Plato, and later in Hellenistic Jewish authors, such as *Epistle of Aristeas* and Philo.[43] Nor would this change be foreign to Stoic theology, although the polemical edge in Plutarch's report makes it difficult to assess the views of Chrysippus in this regard.

The change that occurs in Recension C clearly indicates that the earlier form of the verse offended sensibilities. As such, it probably represents a shift in philosophic climate, possibly attributable to influence from the Platonic tradition, and anticipates similar attitudes that surface later, most notably in Philo.

What becomes clear is that the Mosaic law is being promoted as a universally applicable law that promotes the moral life and gives access to the one transcendent God, creator and cosmic ruler; yet, just as clearly, the poem presents the Mosaic law in philosophically respectable terms.

(d) Changes in verse 12 also reflect a distinctive shift. The commonplace notion of the invisible God who sees all now disappears. In fact, the possibility that humans can see God is now entertained. In the revised form of the verse, two ways of knowing God are contrasted: seeing God with the soul (ψυχή) and seeing God with the mind (νοῦς).[44] While the former is impossible, the latter is not. To concede that human beings, through proper use of the mind, can discern God represents a marked shift in outlook. The distant, transcendent God of the earlier recensions now gives way to a God who is not only closer at hand, but rationally knowable.

(e) The newly added conclusion in verses 45–46 should also be noted. Recension B concluded by emphasizing God's cosmic rule and the

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[41] See *FHJA* 4.164.

[42] Cf. *Quaest. Gen.* 1.100; *Sacr.* 17 §63. For other references, see *FHJA* 4.164.

[43] Riedweg, *Imitation*, 9–10.

[44] Karl Mras, GCS 43,2, 192, sees this antithesis anticipating the ψυχικός-πνευματικός distinction in 1 Cor 2:14 and later Christian circles. See *FHJA* 4.200.

corresponding sense of awe and fear experienced by Orpheus. The thought of saying more than he should causes him to shudder. These elements of majesty and mystery are retained in Recension C, but the two new concluding verses constitute an *inclusio* that returns to the themes of the opening verses. Sounding a note of intimacy that recalls verse 3, verse 45 enjoins the "child" (Ὦ τέκνον) Musaeus to remain close to God in his thoughts (σοῖσι νόοις). This may further reinforce the sentiment expressed in verse 12 that God can be seen only "with the mind" (νῷ). Musaeus is also urged not to abandon this "divine message" (θεοφήμην) and thus avoid the mistake of those uninitiates who are censured in verses 2–3 for having fled the God-given "ordinances of the just." Instead, Musaeus is to keep God's revelation within his heart. If anything, verses 45–46 serve to underscore Recension C's focussed emphasis on the Mosaic revelation.

In summary, the cumulative effect of these changes is quite remarkable. To be sure, the theocentric perspective of the poem is retained: the one God, Creator and Sovereign, remains the central focus. Much of the quasi-philosophical language from the earlier recensions is retained: God is immortal (v. 9, ἀθάνατος), one (v. 10, εἷς), and self-complete (v. 10, αὐτοτελής). As in Recension B, God remains sovereign Ruler of the heavens (vv. 33–39), yet is less remote, "circulating" among all things completed by him (vv. 10–11). As in earlier recensions, God is invisible (v. 21), but as verse 12 states, now in a qualified sense: God can be seen, not with the soul (ψυχή) but only with the mind (νοῦς). By making this epistemological distinction, Recension C renders more specific the mode through which the "Chaldean" acquired knowledge of God. By following the orderly movements of heavenly bodies, he was able to "see" God. Whether νοῦς should be understood here as a kind of rational or mystical understanding is not clear. But what is clear is that knowledge of God is possible by appropriate use of one's mind. Thus, Musaeus is urged to remain close to God in his thoughts (v. 45). In making this move, Recension C has adopted a viewpoint much more closely aligned with Stoic views of natural revelation.

But if some form of natural revelation is envisioned, it does not represent the sole source of knowing God but exists alongside biblical revelation. And this perhaps represents one of the major shifts in perspective that emerges in Recension C, for we are told in vv. 41–42 that the source of our knowledge about God's heavenly sovereignty and God's capacity to render the divine will into earthly form is the Mosaic

legislation. Moreover, its universal applicability appears to be underscored in the opening verses, and as a universal law it serves as the grounds separating initiates from uninitiates. Those who flee the "ordinances of the just" remain outside the pale, while the secret revelation of the divine mysteries is reserved for those who recognize the Mosaic legislation for what it truly is: the divine Logos (λόγον θεῖον, v. 6) that serves as our only true guide and an "ancient saying" (παλαιὸς λόγος, v. 9), or perhaps "ancient word," or even "ancient oracle," that speaks of the one God, who is self-complete yet the one who completes all things and remains immanent within them. Moreover, from this ancient source of revelation, we learn that only in a qualified sense is God responsible for the ills that plague humans. God is not the source of evil, or of human ills, in the unqualified sense of Recensions A and B. Instead, the Mosaic law reveals a more benevolent God, and one who is genuinely without peer (v. 17). Because of the centrally important role of Torah in Recension C, the final sentiment is one of fidelity to the law (vv. 45–46). Musaeus is urged not to "abandon this divine message" but to keep it enshrined in his heart.

If these various changes are viewed comprehensively, we can probably speak of a distinct philosophical shift that occurs, although identifying it more precisely may be difficult. Denying that God is the source of evil certainly aligns the poem more closely with Plato and makes it much more resonant with Philo and similar traditions within Greek-speaking Judaism. God continues to occupy a lofty position as Heavenly King, firmly in control of all things heavenly and earthly, and yet the cumulative effect of the various changes that occur in Recension C is to present a God less distant and more immediately knowable. To this extent, the poem is more Stoic in outlook than previous recensions.

4. *Recension D*

1 I will speak to those to whom it is permitted; shut the doors, you uninitiated,
2 Since you flee the ordinances of the just, **the divine purpose too,**
3 All of you together. You, O Musaeus, child of the light-bearing Moon,
4 Listen! For I am about to proclaim the truth. Let not the former
5 Imaginings of your heart deprive you of the blessed life.
6 But look to the divine Logos, and adhere to it,
7 Letting it guide your heart's deepest thoughts. And walk unwaveringly

Upon the path, looking only to the molder of the universe,
The immortal one. An ancient saying sheds light concerning this one:
He is one, self-generated, and all things have come into being as offspring <of this one>,
And among them he circulates; but him no one among
Mortals sees, though he indeed sees everyone.
And they do not see him, for around him a cloud has been fixed.(= v. 21)
And he himself out of good things does not enjoin evil on mortal
Men. Even so **strife** and hatred accompany **them,**
As well as war, plague, and tearful sufferings.
There is no other one, and he easily sees all things.
You **could not** see him, **until at length here on earth,**
My child, I show you, when I see his
Prints and the strong hand of the mighty God.
But I do not see him; for around him a cloud has been fixed;
For all mortals have mortal pupils in their eyes
Too small, since they are implanted in flesh and bones;
Too weak to see **the one who indeed** rules **all things.**
There remains for me and **for all** men a ten-fold layer of obscurity;
For no one among mortals could see **the ruler** of men,
Except a certain person, a unique figure, by descent an offshoot
Of the Chaldean race; for he expertly saw the **movement of the stars**
And of the sphere(s), **which always rotates around its axle,**
A **perfect** circle, all on their respective axes.
And with wind he creates currents around both air and stream,
And he brings forth **flames** of fire, **lighting up the whole sphere.**
He indeed is firmly established hereafter over the vast heaven
On a golden throne; and earth stands under his feet,
And his right hand to the extremities of the ocean
He stretches out on every side, the mountain base trembles **before him**
In fury, as well as the depth(s) of the hoary, blue sea,
And it is not possible to endure his mighty force. But in every way
He himself is heavenly, and on earth brings all things to completion,
Since he controls its beginning, **but also its middle and end too,**
As a word of the ancients, as the one born in the undergrowth said,

42 Having received **utterance** from God, **indeed** the two-tablet law.
43 **But as** it is not allowed to speak, I tremble **throughout—**
44 **With reason,** from the heights he rules over everything in order.
45 O child, be near to him in your thoughts,
46 And do not abandon this divine message, but rather preserve it in your heart.

Recension D represents the form of the poem preserved in the Tübingen Theosophy and as such constitutes its fullest form. All of the verses found in the previous recensions are included, and a new verse (v. 13), which is virtually a repetition of v. 21, is added. As might be expected of a recension that seeks to combine all the previous recensions into a unified whole, Recension D exhibits conflationary tendencies throughout. In some cases, it adopts readings of one of the previous recensions over against the other two, while in other cases it proposes new readings. The most important redactional changes occur in verses 17–20, where a Christian redactor now envisions the incarnate Christ as the primary mode of revelation.

Some of these changes may be noted:

(1) In verse 2, the uninitiates are now said to flee not only the "ordinances of the just," as stated in Recensions B and C, but "the divine purpose too" (θεῖόν τε νόημα). This latter phrase occurs in none of the previous recensions and replaces Recension C's mention that the "ordinances of the just" were God-given (θείοιο τιθέντος). The precise effect of this change is not clear, although one perhaps thinks less immediately of the Mosaic law.

(2) In verse 4, the language of Recension C indicating present proclamation (ἐξενέπω) is replaced by language drawn from Recensions A and B indicating the futurity of the proclamation (ἐξερέω). Also in verse 10, Recension D forsakes the language of Recension C and opts instead for that of Recensions A and B. Similarly, in verse 12 Recension D reverts to the language of Recensions A and B where God is said to be invisible, yet all-seeing. This appears to be a clear rejection of Recension C's more nuanced position that establishes an epistemological distinction between seeing God with the soul and with the mind. This, combined with the addition of v. 13 that stresses God's invisibility and the reiteration of this point in verses 21 and 26, presents God's inscrutability as a uniform conviction, and in this respect echoes the transcendent outlook of Recension A.

(3) In verse 8, by contrast, Recension D retains the language of Recension C describing God as "molder" (τυπωτήν) of the universe,

which had replaced the language of Recensions A and B describing God as "master" (ἄνακτα) of the universe.

(4) Verse 14 offers another instance where Recension D opts for the language of Recension C over that of Recensions A and B. The theological advantages of doing so are quite clear. There seems little point in perpetuating the problematic features of verse 14 as preserved in Recensions A and B. And yet, Recension D is not fully satisfied with the overall unit. As anyone can see, the language of verses 14–16 in Recension C is not altogether felicitous. Even if God is absolved of the responsibility of sending evil upon mortals, in what sense do "grace and hatred accompany him" (αὐτῷ δὲ χάρις καὶ μῖσος ὀπηδεῖ), much less "war, plague, and tearful sufferings"? Apparently recognizing the problematic nature of these verses, Recension D smooths out the difficulty by replacing "him" (αὐτῷ) with "them" (αὐτοῖς) and "grace" (χάρις) with "strife" (κ' ἔρις). The effect of these changes is to rehearse a series of "evils" that beset not God but mortals. As a result, verses 14–16 become more coherent and logically consistent. God is not responsible for the presence of evil among mortals (v. 14), and yet *they* undeniably experience evil in various forms: strife, hatred, war, plague, and tearful sufferings (vv. 15–16).[45]

(5) In verse 11 Recension D portrays God as "circulating" among the created order. Here is an instance where Recension D deserts the language of Recension A and sides instead with a change introduced by Recension B and retained by Recension C.

(6) Verses 17–20 are generally regarded as the most conspicuous indication that Recension D has undergone revision at the hands of a Christian redactor. In the Recensions A and B verse 17 is a straightforward statement about God's being without peer, a claim retained in truncated form in Recension C. Verses 18–20 are introduced as new material in Recension C, where they elaborate the motif of God's inscrutability. The language is quite cryptic, but Orpheus appears to reassure Musaeus that complete understanding (of God?) comes by seeing God; moreover, Orpheus promises to serve as Musaeus's guide in this elusive quest. A number of redactional changes occur in Recension D, and the language is no less difficult. But the cumulative effect of the changes produces something like this: God is without peer and is capable of seeing all things. This latter claim repeats what has already been said in verse 12. The revised form of verses 18–20

[45] For fuller discussion, see *FHJA* 4.225–26.

apparently envision some future revelatory moment when Musaeus will be able to see God. This will occur after Orpheus has seen "his prints and the strong hand of the mighty God" (ἴχνια καὶ στιβαρὴν χεῖρα κρατεροῖο θεοῖο). While the wording of these verses does not differ substantially from that in Recension C, the syntax appears to shift slightly. In any case, the mention of "prints" and "hands" convinced early glossators that this was a reference to Christ's incarnation.[46]

(7) Verses 21–26, which speak of God's inscrutability and human inability to see God, represent an intriguing amalgamation of earlier elements. Verse 21, which mentions the cloud that obscures Orpheus's vision of God, has occurred earlier in all three recensions. Verses 22–23, however, which mention the limitations of human vision (mortal pupils), are absent in Recension C. The form in which they appear in Recension D corresponds to their form in Recension B. Verse 24, which occurs previously only in Recension A, is also included by Recension D. But whereas Recension A spoke of "Zeus the ruler of all things" (Δία τὸν πάντων μεδέοντα), Recension D neutralizes this reference and now speaks of "the one who indeed rules all things" (τὸν δὴ πάντα μεδέοντα).[47]A slight change in verse 25 produces a more felicitous verse which speaks of a "ten-fold layer of obscurity" that obstructs the vision of Orpheus as well as everyone else. Verse 26 is retained from Recension C as an appropriate introduction to the "Chaldean" section.

(8) The "Chaldean" section (verses 28–32) largely replicates the section that was introduced into Recension B, although some changes of wording have been introduced to clarify and smooth out the astronomical language. Verse 32, which only appears earlier in Recension C, presents significant changes. In its altered form here, the omission of the phrase "of water" (νάματος) at the beginning of the verse is compensated for by altering the remainder of the verse. Now "flames" (σέλατα instead of σέλας) of fire are brought forth by God, which results in "lighting up the whole sphere" (διαφεγγέα πάντῃ).

(9) Verses 33–42, which depict God's heavenly enthronement and cosmic sovereignty, also represent an amalgamation of previous material. Verses 33–35 appear in all three previous recensions, but Recension D basically follows Recension A, with some minor variations. Verse 36 is a conflation of material drawn from Recensions A, B, and C. Verse 37

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[46] See discussion in *FHJA* 4.226–28.

[47] For a discussion of the text-critical problems relating to this phrase, see *FHJA* 4.167.

occurs previously only in Recension A, but Recension D has made the necessary alterations to accommodate it. Verses 38–39 appear in identical form in Recensions B and C. Verse 40, which mentions the three-part formula, carries forward material introduced in Recension B and continued in Recension C, yet Recension D has its own distinctive version. Verses 41–42 are taken, with minor changes, from Recension C.

(10) The concluding section, verses 43–46, reproduces with only minor changes the same section from Recension C, thus retaining the emphasis on fearful respect before the divine mystery.

In summary, it might be said that Recension D retains the basic profile of Recension C. The Mosaic legislation remains focal and is portrayed in much the same way as it is in Recension C. It is God-given legislation that is universally applicable. The portrait of God is also similar to that of Recension C: the one God, Creator and Sovereign Lord of the universe, yet "circulating" among all things. Knowledge of this inscrutable God is less nuanced than what we find in Recension C, yet God is revealed to the Chaldean through the natural order and to all humans through the divine legislation.

In certain important respects, linguistic and syntactical difficulties of previous recensions are smoothed out in Recension D, suggesting that a consistent effort has been made to produce a coherent, refined version of the poem.

D. *Conclusion*

Even though this construal of the recensional history masks many technical problems and has been strongly contested by both LaFargue and Riedweg, I still regard it as the most plausible.[48] I believe the first three stages occurred between the end of the third century BCE and the middle of the first century BCE. It is even conceivable to me that Recension C belongs to the mid-second century BCE.[49]

I remain convinced that Recension A is non-Jewish, that its provenance is Alexandrian, and that here it became known within the Alexandrian Jewish community. Its emphasis on the oneness of God

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[48] I spell this out in greater detail in "The Textual Tradition of Pseudo-Orpheus: Walter or Riedweg?" in *Geschichte-Tradition-Reflexion. Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (3 vols.; eds. H. Cancik, H. Lichtenberger, and P. Schäfer; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1996) 1.159–80.

[49] See my stemma in *FHJA* 4.65.

resonates with many other Orphic texts, as well as a range of other pagan texts in the Hellenistic period. The epithets used of God reflect Hellenistic popular, philosophical piety.

The monotheistic emphasis, combined with the statement that Orpheus himself is unable to see God, was an offer the first Jewish redactor could not refuse. In the well-established tradition of correcting and amplifying such pseudonymous texts, the first Jewish redactor introduces Abraham as the unique recipient of divine knowledge. But this posed a theological problem for subsequent Jewish readers: if Abraham is the sole recipient of divine revelation, where does this leave Moses? The second Jewish redactor supplies the answer: the divine legislation given to Moses is universally applicable and serves as the measure by which moral conduct is judged. Those who flee its ordinances stand under judgment. But the way to God is open, and those who allow the divine Logos to guide their minds aright can see God, especially if they turn to the two-tablet Law given by God to Moses at Sinai. This viewpoint was retained by the Christian redactor with the cryptic qualification that God could also be seen through the incarnate Christ.

THE ATHANASIAN UNDERSTANDING OF SCRIPTURE

Charles Kannengiesser

The greatest obstacle to overcome in order to share the Athanasian understanding of Scripture seems to be modern expertise in biblical exegesis. The requirements of contemporary hermeneutics tend to obscure what Scripture really meant for the fourth-century church leader. The task of any exegetical undertaking of today has been described as the "exact interpretation of a text in its original meanings," to use the words of Sean McEvenue in a luminous essay entitled "The Old Testament: Scripture or Theology ?"[1] That is, contemporary exegesis aims at historical "exactness." For Athanasius and the overwhelming majority of interpreters in the ancient church, that issue was not, and could not be, on their hermeneutical agenda. The reason was simple: the meaning of the sacred text was never considered by them as bound to past traditions. The original production of the text was not significant for them in itself, but only as included in the reception process of that text as a living source of divine revelation. If the text had ever been produced, it was indeed for no other reason than its present reception. "Original" meanings were therefore never differentiated from the reception in which the interpreters found themselves involved. In their own reader responses as members of church communities, ancient interpreters perceived a transcendent truth of Scripture, a truth which was pointedly "original" for them, originating in the same divine mystery in which they participated, thanks to their present faith experience. Modern biblical scholars search for "original meanings" as documenting a long forgotten past in the way in which today's paleontologists explore the fossilized bones of dinosaurs in order to reconstruct the real Jurassic Park of a hundred million years ago. Such a scientific imagination was unknown to Athanasius and his contemporaries. Scripture was for them a living reality at the core of their ecclesiastical tradition, hence their discourse about the δύναμις, the "power" of Scripture, not the abstract power of a legal authority, but the actual efficiency of God's word,

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[1] *Interpretation* 35 (1981) 236.

generating truth and consistency in their communities and their personal lives.[2]

As soon as one considers exegesis in the sense in which Athanasius practiced it, as a faithful reception of actualized divine truth, one enters a spiritual universe shaped by theological presuppositions. In short, for Athanasius to interpret Scripture was to invest all of Scripture in his Christian self-affirmation. To inquire for the exact interpretation of any scriptural passage meant in all cases to confirm his identification with the church tradition to which he belonged. In other words, the Athanasian understanding of Scripture engages us in Athanasius's spiritual biography.[3] By such an approach to Athanasius's exegesis, numerous questions are brought to mind which would never be asked about contemporary exegetes. In order to raise only one or two of these questions, I am following a chronological order of Athanasian writings which has its own problematic aspects, but I would base my observations on data commonly accepted by the experts.[4]

A. *The Hermeneutical Enigma of* De incarnatione

Athanasius's earliest doctrinal essay, *De incarnatione*, reached its final form around 335, when the young bishop, then thirty-six years old and in office less than seven years, was on the verge of being exiled to Trier in Gaul by Emperor Constantine. The use of Scripture in *De incarnatione* is astonishing for its mature density, and it is of central significance for Athanasius's subsequent intellectual career.[5]

True to the best of Origen's teaching as transmitted in the local tradition, young Athanasius succeeds in presenting a newly focussed idea about salvation history and Christian identity as a whole. The treatise includes an initial chapter on the prolegomena of divine incarnation

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[2] τὰ τοιαῦτα γὰρ πάντα ῥητὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει δύναμιν καὶ διάνοιαν: Athanasius *C. Ar.* 2:1 (PG 26, 149A5).

[3] For a short survey of Athanasian exegesis, see my "Athanasius von Alexandrien als Exeget," in *Stimuli. Exegese und ihre Hermeneutik in Antike und Christentum*, Fs. Ernst Dassmann (eds. G. Schöllgen and C. Scholten; JAC Ergänzungsband 23; Münster, 1996) 336–43; or my "Athanasius of Alexandria," in *A Handbook of Patristic Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

[4] A tentative presentation of these data, in my "Literarische Leistung und geistiges Erbe des Athanasius von Alexandrien in heutiger Sicht," *WS* 100 (1987) 155–73.

[5] See my edition of *On the Incarnation*, SC 199, published in 1973: "Introduction. Chapitre IV, Le recours à la Bible," 157–62.

from the Genesis story on,[6] which leads to a perfectly Origenian description of the incarnation itself in terms of image likeness and salvific renovation of the mind through the divine Logos. But that description does not appear until the third chapter[7] because in between Athanasius has introduced another description of the same mystery (chap. 2, par. 8, 9, and 10[8] according to the numbering of Migne's Patrology), a description which he calls αἰτία πρώτη, "first reason." That "first reason" is exclusively formulated in Pauline terms[9] as the victory over death and corruption secured by the life-giving Father through the death on the cross of the incarnate Logos. That same "first reason," as preceding the Origenian teaching condensed in the second description of the incarnation mystery now in chapter 3, par. 11 to 16, determines the long discussion of chapter 4 on the salvific and universal efficiency of the victory over death accomplished by the incarnate Logos in his paschal mystery. Chapter 4 is as long as chapters 1, 2, and 3 together, running from par. 17 to par. 32, and building up the bulk of the whole treatise.[10]

The latter is completed by two more traditional pieces of Christian apologetics, one against "the unbelief of the Jews" (τὴν ἀπιστίαν τῶν Ἰουδαίων; 33,1: PG 25, 152C; SC 199, 382.4) from par. 33 to 40, another one against pagan idolatry and philosophy, from par. 41 to the conclusion of the treatise in par. 56–57. As if it were not enough to have enriched the catechetical framework of his church tradition based on the Origenian doctrine of salvation with a new focus announced in terms of Pauline dialectics, the young author decided also to reshape the standard collection of biblical prooftexts, the so-called Testimonia, which his church had opposed for several generations against rabbinic objections. Indeed chapter 5 of *De incarnatione,* par. 33 to 40, includes a unique synthesis, with a first series of such Testimonia, concerning God's incarnation, which one reads in the same order in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Demonstratio evangelica* and less frequently in Origen's writings, and a second series, about the passion and death of Christ, only to be met

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[6] SC 199.262–88.

[7] SC 199.302–24.

[8] SC 199.288–302.

[9] Rom 6:8; 2 Cor 5:14–15; Heb 2:9–10, 14–15; 1 Cor 15:21–22; 1 Tim 6:15.

[10] More on the central significance of the paschal mystery of Christ in Athanasius's written legacy may be found in "Le mystère pascal du Christ selon Athanase," *RSR* 63 (1975) 407–42, where I dared to express my first doubts about the authenticity of *C. Ar.* 3.

elsewhere in Cyprian of Carthage's *Testimoniorum liber secundus*, par. 13 to 20. In particular, the extended quotation of Isaiah 53, absent in Eusebius and in Athanasius's Alexandrian predecessors, including Origen, is proper only to Cyprian and Athanasius in the context of anti-Judaica.[11]

Thus a real hermeneutical enigma challenges us in Athanasius's treatise *On the Incarnation.* How could this young bishop, who was too young according to his opponents to have been installed with canonical regularity in the late summer of 328, show up in his very first doctrinal exposition with such an independent control over biblical thought and such a widespread citation of Scripture? Where did he acquire the consistent autonomy of thinking obvious in the blunt statements of his apologetic essay?

The whole vision of Athanasius's initial treatise is centered on the concrete circumstances of Christ's death and resurrection. Christian theology is thereby changed from a theory in the intellectualistic style of Origen's thought into a more descriptive contemplation of the gospel narratives, and the gospel itself becomes the actual and central reference for the present affirmation of faith. That same vision shall impose itself again in the bishop's next written work, his masterpiece known under the conventional title *Orations against the Arians.* Should a close affinity be verified between *On the Incarnation* and the *Orations,* the enigmatic richness of biblical thought in the first essay would call even more for an explanation. At the 1994 meeting of the North American Patristic Society in Chicago, I suggested such an explanation in light of the newly debated Letters of Antony the Hermite, and my provisional suggestion (it cannot be more for the moment) was published in the *Coptic Church Review.*[12]

B. *Educational Hermeneutics in* Contra Arianos *I–II*

The *Orations against the Arians* were completed around 339, when Athanasius found refuge in the West for four years because of the action against him by a coalition of eastern bishops supported by the

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[11] For more details, some tentative remarks: "Les citations bibliques du traité Contre les Païens et Sur l'Incarnation du Verbe," *La Bible et les Pères* (Colloque de Strasbourg [1–3 octobre 1969]; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971) 135–60.

[12] "Antony, Athanasius, Evagrius: The Egyptian Fate of Origenism," *CCR* 16 (1995) 3–8.

administration of Constantine's son, Constantius II.[13] My dating to around 339 of the letter sent by Athanasius to Egyptian monks about Arius's death in 336,[14] a dating agreed to by Annick Martin in France and Luise Abramowski and Martin Tetz in Germany, allows us to identify another of Athanasius's letters to monks[15] as the accompanying message to the first draft of *Contra Arianos* which he submitted to his friends in the desert. The message reveals that the bishop had been pushed insistently by monastic supporters into writing a formal and public statement about the heresy of Arius. Ever since Bernard de Montfaucon at the turn of the eighteenth century, readers have been puzzled that the Arian dispute had been passed over in complete silence by the author of *On the Incarnation,* even if the very fact of focusing on divine incarnation serves by itself as a blow against Arianism.[16]

The letter to the monks sent with the draft of *Contra Arianos* goes on, and the *Orations against the Arians* were finally composed, but not without many painful hesitations and interruptions.[17] Actually, Athanasius never mentions in that letter "Orations" in the plural. His polemical essay *Contra Arianos* became for him a privileged opportunity to undergo a spiritual experience: he engaged in an inner dialog with the divine Logos, far from searching for any direct encounter with the addressed opponents.[18] The final recommendations of the confidential message emphasize the tone of utter humility, just short of embarrassment, which pervades the whole letter: "Now when you have read this account, pray for me, and exhort one another so to do. And immediately send it back to me, and suffer no one whatever to take a copy of it, nor transcribe it for yourselves. . . . For it is not safe that the writings of us babblers and private persons should fall into the hands of them that shall come after" (563–64).

The work *Contra Arianos* consists mainly in a series of exegetical essays, Scripture being the only decisive source of inspiration for the

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[13] T. D. Barnes, *Athanasius and Constantius. Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[14] *Athanase d'Alexandrie évêque et écrivain.* Une lecture des Traités contre les Ariens (Paris: Beauchesne, 1983) 374–85.

[15] *Ad monachos* PG 25:692-93; ed. A. Robertson, NPNF, 4.563–64.

[16] *On the Incarnation* is best understood as a nonviolent protest against Arianism.

[17] "I frequently designed to stop and to cease writing; believe me, I did" (1.563).

[18] "For the more I desired to write, and endeavoured to force myself to understand the divinity of the Word, so much the more did the knowledge thereof withdraw itself from me; and in proportion as I thought that I apprehended it, in so much I perceived myself to fail of doing so" (trans. H. Newman; 1.563).

improviste polemist.[19] That does not in itself characterize the hermeneutics of Athanasius. More specifically, the hermeneutical significance of *Contra Arianos* is due to the fact that, as in *On the Incarnation*, the author comments on Scripture exclusively in the framework of a theological actualizing of divine mysteries. For the author, Scripture is not a classic in need of scholarly exegesis. At the core of Athanasius's response to Arianism, Scripture is itself the burning issue: his identity as a believer is at stake in the statements of his commentary. As noted in the accompanying letter to the monks, "I have written a short account of the sufferings which [we] and the church have undergone, refuting, according to my ability, the accursed heresy of the Arian madmen" (1.563). So much for polemical overtones in fourth-century rhetoric, but the hermeneutical stress must be laid on "ourselves and the church" because it is in the combined reference to his personal journey as a believer and to the institutional tradition of the church to which he belonged that this author expounds his whole understanding of sacred Scripture.

In spite of its polemical frame, *Contra Arianos* remains frustratingly vague about the Arian heresy. On the other hand, it is filled with multiplied and passionate argumentation by which the author shows deep concern about the biblical awareness of his readers in outlining the correct interpretation of scriptural verses as he understands them against Arian claims. The outcome is not so much to consolidate a system of orthodoxy which did not yet exist in his circles, but to pioneer a new pastoral way of interpreting Scripture.

In other words, Athanasius's hermeneutical pedagogy highlights in *Contra Arianos* a very unusual purpose, educational in nature and community centered within his tradition of faith. He shows no eagerness to enter into any direct fight with the so-called "Arian mad-men." I was not a little surprised when I realized after a long time that the *Orations* never quote the famous Thalia of Arius, known only through excerpts transmitted by Athanasius in a preface subsequently added to the *Contra Arianos* and repeated in later writings.[20] Among contemporary critics

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[19] In the NPNF edition, Robertson keeps the subtitles introduced by H. Newman: *C. Ar.* 1: "Chapter XI. Texts Explained; and First, Phil. II. 9, 10" (327), "Chapter XII. Texts Explained; Secondly, Psalm XLV.7, 8" (333), "Chapter XIII. Texts Explained; Thirdly, Hebrews 1,4" (337); *C. Ar.* 2: "Chapter XIV. Texts Explained; Fifthly, Acts 11,36" (354), etc. Thus Robertson underlines (1) the exclusively exegetical motivation of the author and (2) the artificial distinction between *C. Ar.* 1 and 2.

[20] *Athanase d'Alexandrie évêque et écrivain*, 115 and 201.

endless speculation on the poor fragments of the Thalia distracts people too often from the much more significant evidence of Athanasius's lack of polemical interest in those fragments when composing his *Orations against the Arians*. In this work the bishop focuses on Scripture with intense fervor in order to mark his opposition to Arianism, but his interpretive procedures function independently from the ideological storm caused by Arius and his episcopal supporters in the eastern provinces of the empire; they are dictated to him by his pastoral church experience.

Only one or two of the author's rules of interpretation are evidenced in the lenghthy comments on Scripture accumulated in *Contra Arianos*. Originally, *Orations* I and II were a single treatise which Athanasius divided into two treatises only after some heavy editing and which comprised in particular polemical sections added to the original draft sent to the monks in 339. What is known today as the third *Oration against the Arians* differs from *Orations* I and II in purpose, style, and structure, to the point where I felt obliged to deny its authenticity.[21] Now I am very pleased to discover that the official continuation of the *Athanasius Werke* (initially edited by H.-G. Opitz until 1943 at the Academy of Berlin, coming to fruition at long last in the spring of 1996) by a critical edition of the Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya[22] supports my distinction between *Contra Arianos* I and II and *Contra Arianos* III,[23] even if the authorship of III remains a matter of dispute.

In *C. Ar.* I, 54 Athanasius states: "Now it is right and necessary, as in all divine Scripture, so here faithfully to expound the time of which the apostle wrote, and the person, and the point (τὸν καιρόν, τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα, 124 B, in reference to Heb 1:4; 3:1). This statement, noteworthy as it is in its extreme simplicity, articulates a permanent concern of the Alexandrian interpreter, which was to keep all scriptural interpretation focused on the central mystery of Christian faith, in his mind the concrete reality of God's incarnation. What may

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[21] *Athanase d'Alexandrie évêque et écrivain*, 310–68: "La différence doctrinale de *C. A.* III"; more extensively in "Die Sonderstellung der dritten Arianerrede des Athanasius," *ZKG* 106 (1995) 18–55 (one or two mistaken references should not keep one from noticing the real problem of the peculiar nature of *C. Ar.* 3).

[22] *Athanasius Werke*. Erster Band. Erster Teil. Die dogmatischen Schriften (published by the Patristische Arbeitsstelle Bochum under the direction of Martin Tetz). Erste Lieferung, *Epistula ad episcopos Aegypti et Libyae* (eds. Karin Metzler, D. U. Hansen, and K. Savvidis; Berlin/New York: W. De Gruyter, 1996).

[23] "Zu den dogmatischen Schriften von Band I der Athanasius Werke zählen: 1. (Athanasiana) . . . *Orationes contra Arianos I–II. Oratio contra Arianos III*" (V).

sound utterly artificial to contemporary exegetes was obviously of a consistent clarity in the Athanasian understanding of Scripture, namely that Wisdom personified in Prov 8:22, as much as the apostle Paul, spoke in reference to the historic "moment," or the transcendent *kairos,* and to the divine "persona" and salvific "purpose" of the incarnate Logos. In pointing out the basic rule of that Athanasian understanding of Scripture, we are dealing indeed with a perception of scriptural truth which is historically focused without being at all historicist.

Another fundamental rule of interpretation confirms in *Contra Arianos* the vision just outlined. In *Oration* II, par. 44, at the start of his direct comments on Prov 8:22, Athanasius observes: "Since these are proverbs (παροιμίαι), and it is expressed in the way of proverbs (παροιμιωδῶς), we must not expound them nakedly (ἁπλοῶς) in their first sense, but we must inquire into the person (τὸ πρόσωπον ζητεῖν), and thus religiously put the sense on it (μετ' εὐσεβείας τὸν νοῦν ἐφαρμόζειν)" (240C–D). "Nakedly" means "in the literal sense"; "religiously" means "in conformity with the divine self-revelation contained in the verse"; and because the revelation is scriptural, it means more precisely "in conformity with the nature of the verbal self-disclosure of Wisdom consigned in sacred writing." In other words, interpreters can be accurate only if their discourse fits with the one adopted in Scripture itself. Scriptural παροιμίαι call for explanations given παροιμιωδῶς. Origen had already observed in commenting on Jeremiah that any adequate commentator of the old prophet in the church of his day was to become a sort of prophet. And again Athanasius, later in his life, would write a whole letter to his friend Marcellinos with the certitude that the only right way to know biblical Psalms is to pray with them and to become psalmic in one's own prayer.

The second hermeneutical rule noted in *C. Ar.* is therefore a rule of actualizing biblical data through their appropriation by the faithful in the present church. The christological focus of that rule is at once ecclesiological, not without giving interpreters a chance to affirm individual convictions and to express their own spiritual sensibility.

In the thirty-three years of his long career following the writing of *C. Ar.*, the Alexandrian bishop kept amazingly true to the foundations of biblical hermeneutics laid down in *On the Incarnation* and in the first two *Discourses against the Arians* as we read them today. The German editors of the circular *Letter to the Bishops of Egypt and Libya,* just published, count as many as 170 biblical passages quoted literally or by approximation in the twenty-three short capitula of that *Letter,* dating

from 356. In the *Life of Antony*, composed a few years later, the same observation is made by Professor Bartelink, its most recent editor in the series Sources Chrétiennes: over two hundred scriptural references are needed for a thorough analysis of the *Vita.* In the *Letter to Marcellinos* all one hundred fifty Psalms of the canonical Psalter are distinctly mentioned, several times, in order to illustrate their convenient appropriation in the daily pace of a Christian lifestyle. Nowhere more than in the *Festal Letters,* published annually whenever possible in order to announce the dates of Lent, Easter, and Pentecost, does the symphonic call on Scripture, as Athanasius used to repeat it, resound more spontaneously. By a closer examination, the *Festal Letters* would also show, more explicitly than other writings of Athanasius, how his understanding of Scripture shifted from the young bishop's genuinely lyrical style, in line with Origen's *Homilies on Canticle,* a style still sensible in the *Festal Letters* from 328 to 335, to a more realistic and down-to-earth consideration, tempered by pastoral constraints.

My intention here was only to explore the resources of a biographical approach of the Athanasian understanding of Scripture. That approach seems to be appropriate for catching the motivation and the purpose of an interpreter of the Bible too much infused with biblical awareness to become a learned exegete.

CONVERSION TO PAUL'S GOSPEL

Abraham J. Malherbe

For some time it has been pointed out that Paul's preaching, particularly the Lukan version presented in the book of Acts, shares some features with the ancient accounts of conversion to philosophy.[1] The person who was most perceptive in exploring the similarities and differences between Christian and pagan philosophic conversion was Arthur Darby Nock, Everett Ferguson's and my mentor, whom Ferguson also served as assistant in instruction.[2] Werner Jaeger, also at Harvard at the time, held a similar view,[3] and it is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that Ferguson, adducing the example of Lucian of Samosata's Nigrinus, has held that "conversion to philosophy . . . was the nearest parallel to Christian conversion."[4] This view has been widely, but not universally, held.[5]

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[1] See Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30–150* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959 [orig. German pub., 1914]) 233–57.

[2] Especially in *Conversion: The Old and the New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933) 14, 164–86; see also "Bekehrung," *RAC* 2 (1954) 107–8; "Conversion and Adolescence," in *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World* (ed. Zeph Stewart; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972) 1.469–80.

[3] W. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961) 10.

[4] Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds to Early Christianity* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 332.

[5] For the importance of philosophy to conversion, see Gustave Bardy, *La conversion au christianisme durant les trois premiers siècles* (Paris: Aubier, 1949) 46–49; Paul Aubin, *Le problème de la "conversion": Étude sur un terme commun à l'hellénisme et au christianisme des trois premiers siècles* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1962) 17–31, 49–68; Philip Rousseau, "Conversion," *OCD* (3d ed.; Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1996) 386–87. For a contrary view, emphasizing supernatural power and the bestowing of miraculous benefits by which conversion is brought about, see Ramsay MacMullen, *Christianizing the Roman Empire A.D. 100–400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984) 3–5, and the examples in Ramsay MacMullen and Eugene N. Lane, *Paganism and Christianity 100–425 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992) 6–7, 207–15. But see Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Power: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991) 22–23, 39–40, for dissent.

I gave some attention to Luke's accounts of conversion in an article published in *The Second Century,* the journal founded and edited by Everett Ferguson,[6] and also briefly dealt elsewhere with conversion in Paul's writings and the similarities between Paul's and the philosophers' view of conversion.[7] Our honoree will recognize our teacher's influence, to which he also is still clearly captive, as I now continue to try to get it right by dealing with one dimension of the phenomenon in Paul's ministry. My earlier efforts in dealing with Paul's Thessalonian converts have primarily been concerned with the immediate consequences of their conversion. Here I wish to concentrate on the conversion experience itself. While taking brief notice of similarities to other descriptions of conversion, I here focus on Paul. In dealing with similarities and differences, I am reminded of the comment by Yogi Berra Jr., who, in response to a remark that his malapropisms were similar to those of his father, replied, "Yes, but our similarities are different."

With some exceptions, according to Acts people converted in response to preaching, and they did so instantaneously.[8] The preaching made use of proofs from prophecy and adapted traditions borrowed from hellenistic-Jewish propaganda and popular philosophy.[9] The impression left is that the inherent persuasiveness of the preaching brought about conversion.[10] The content of the preaching is always Jesus, and its aim is repentance of sins and conversion (Luke 24:46–49). For the Jews in

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[6] Abraham J. Malherbe, "'Not in a Corner': Early Christian Apologetic in Acts 26:26," *SecCen* 5 (1985/86) 193–210; reprinted in *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989) 147–63.

[7] Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) 21–33.

[8] Acts 2:37–41; 8:26–38; 13:16–43, 44–48; 16:14–15, 29–37; 17:2–4. Combined with demonstrations of the Spirit: 10:34–48. Paul's conversion, of course, is instantaneous, but is more in the nature of a call, and is not in response to preaching (9:1–19; 22:6–16). See also the example of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–8). The Prodigal Son's "conversion" ("coming to himself," Luke 15:17) may be the culmination of growing remorse. See Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 3.37.3, for many people converting "at the first meeting."

[9] See Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 150–63.

[10] Emphasized especially by D. W. Kemmler, *Faith and Human Reason: A Study of Paul's Method of Preaching as Illustrated by 1–2 Thessalonians and Acts 17,2–4* (NovTSup 40; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1975). For the argument that Luke uses an Aristotelian enthymeme, see W. S. Kurz, "The Function of Christological Proof for Luke and Justin," Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1977, and "Hellenistic Rhetoric and the Christological Proof of Luke-Acts," *CBQ* 42 (1980) 171–95.

Jerusalem, the call is to repent of their complicity in the killing of Jesus (Acts 2:33, 36; 3:13–15, 19; perhaps 5:31).

In the preaching to Gentiles, other elements enter. At the end of his sermon in Athens, after speaking of God the Creator, Paul calls for repentance in view of the eschatological judgment to be executed justly by Jesus (Acts 17:30–31). The moral element implicit here becomes more accentuated in Paul's recountal to Agrippa of his conversion: The purpose of his commission was to open the Gentiles' eyes "that they may turn from darkness to light" (Acts 26:18) and to preach forgiveness to them "that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds worthy of their repentance" (26:20). The enumeration of such worthy deeds in Luke 3:6–14 makes clear how important moral reformation was in Luke's view of conversion.

What is striking in these conversion accounts is how relatively restrained people are emotionally in their response to preaching. The Lystrans responded with enthusiasm to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:18); the Beroeans received the word gladly (Acts 17:11; cf. Luke 8:13); and Peter's audience on Pentecost was cut to the heart in remorse (Acts 2:38). But, for the rest, the response is not as dramatic as one might expect from accounts which had, at least partially, a protreptic purpose.[11] It is on this response to preaching, particularly Paul's preaching as reported in 1 Thess 1:6, that I wish to focus in this paper. Before turning to that passage, some preliminary considerations will be in order.

Mixed Emotions in Conversion

Conversion "implies rejection of one way of life for another, generally better, after brief and intense insight into the shortcomings of self or the demands of circumstances."[12] The moral philosophers of Paul's day in their speeches sketched in vivid detail the error in their listeners' lives they should reject and held out the possibility that their hearers might attain their human potential by living rational lives. The philosophers' method was to destabilize their listeners, making them at one moment delighted, then at another grieved at the same thing, thus unsettling their

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[11] See Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 161–63.

[12] Rousseau, "Conversion," 386. For a treatment of conversion from the perspective of modern psychology of religion, see Lewis R. Rambo, *Understanding Religious Conversion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

souls (Dio Chrysostom *Oratio* 4.77–78). They wanted people to feel disturbed about their own moral condition and to be prepared to convert to a better way of life. They expected their converts to respond emotionally as well as rationally, shuddering, feeling ashamed, repenting, and experiencing joy and wonder (see Musonius Rufus, frg. 49).[13]

Many of the accounts of conversion to philosophy were propagandistic in the sense that they illustrated the human condition that required an act of will for the person's betterment. That they were stylized enhances their value as expressions of what was thought typical of an ideal conversion.[14] A vivid description of such a conversion, perhaps of his own, is given by Lucian of Samosata (*Nigrinus* 3–5), the example mentioned by Ferguson, as he recounts a response to a philosopher's words:

> I took it all in with eager, wide-open soul, and at the moment I couldn't imagine what had come over me; I was all confused. At first I felt hurt because he had criticised what was dearest to me—wealth and money and reputation,—and I all but cried at their downfall; and then I thought them paltry and ridiculous, and was glad to be looking up, as it were, out of the murky atmosphere of my past life to a clear sky and great light. (LCL translation)

This account was by no means unique.[15]

There are striking similarities, *mutatis mutandis*, between the philosophers' view of the matter and the examples of conversion from more recent times adduced by William James. For the preacher's expectation, James cites Jonathan Edwards:

> Surely it is not unreasonable that before God delivers us from a state of sin and liability to everlasting woe, he should give us some considerable sense of the evil from which he delivers us, in order that we may know and feel the importance of salvation. . . . [I]t appears agreeable to this wisdom, that those who are saved should be made sensible of their Being, in those different states. In the first place, that they should be made sensible of their

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[13] See Plutarch *Quomodo adolescens poetas audire debeat* 36E; *De recta audiendi* 46D. The subject is discussed, with copious documentation in Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 21–28.

[14] See Johannes Hahn, *Der Philosoph und die Gesellschaft: Selbstverständnis, öffentliches Auftreten und populäre Erwartigung in der hohen Kaiserzeit* (HABES 7; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1989) 59–60.

[15] See, for example, the popular account of the conversion of Polemo in response to Xenocrates' instruction in virtue and temperance: Lucian *Bis accusatus* 17; cf. Horace *Sat.* 2.3.253–57; Epictetus *Diss.* 3.1.14; Diogenes Laertius *Vitae philosophorum* 4.16.

> state of condemnation; and afterwards, of their state of deliverance and happiness.[16]

An account of conversion shares with Lucian's the same emotional turmoil and even the same image of light and darkness:

> I came out as from a sepulchre, from an abyss of darkness; and I was living, perfectly living. But I wept, for at the bottom of that gulf I saw the extreme of misery from which I had been saved by an infinite mercy; and I shuddered at the sight of my iniquities, stupefied, melted, overwhelmed with wonder and with gratitude. . . . I can answer nothing save this, that on entering the church I was in darkness altogether, and on coming out of it I saw the fulness of the light.[17]

Paul's converts experienced similar emotional turmoil when they accepted his message.

". . . in deep distress and with joy inspired by the Holy Spirit"

Paul writes more about his preaching than about its reception. I have discussed the matter elsewhere[18] and here wish to concentrate on what we can discern about the reception of Paul's preaching, about which he offers mere hints. Empowered by God, Paul says, he stormed the fortified human intellect and laid siege to it (2 Cor 10:3–6), demanding that it then be renewed and the new believer be transformed in the process (Rom 12:3).[19] The way in which he brought about conversion was by engendering faith in his hearers' hearts through preaching (Rom 10:8–10). This subjective response to his preaching was the work of the Spirit, who was active in his preaching (1 Cor 2:1–5) and moved his hearers to oral confession (1 Cor 12:3). Something similar resulted when Christian prophets, moved by the Spirit, spoke in orderly fashion: if "an unbeliever or spiritually ungifted person enters (the assembly), he is convicted by all, the secrets of his heart are laid bare: and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you"

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[16] William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study of Human Nature* (The Gifford Lectures, 1901–1902; rev. repr.; New York: Longman's Green, 1920) 229.

[17] James, 225–26.

[18] See Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 28–33, for documentation. What follows is discussed in greater detail in my forthcoming commentary on the Thessalonian letters in the Anchor Bible.

[19] See Malherbe, "Antisthenes and Odysseus and Paul at War," *HTR* 76 (1983) 163–73 (repr. in *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 91–119).

(1 Cor 14:24–25).[20] This subjective response combined distress and joy, according to 1 Thess 1:6, the same emotions we have seen present in other conversions.

The reason this verse has not been considered evidence of a conversion response is that most commentators take θλῖψις to refer to "tribulations" or persecutions which Paul's converts in Thessalonica experienced as a consequence of their conversion. Sometimes Acts 17:5–9 (cf. 1 Thess 2:2) and 1 Thess 2:14 are brought into the discussion to identify the persecutors.[21] Even if Paul had in mind their post-conversion experience, θλῖψις need not be taken to refer to persecution, but could have a subjective connotation. The Thessalonians experienced social, intellectual, and religious dislocation when they converted, and they must have suffered confusion, bewilderment, dejection, and despair.[22] This was the experience of converts to Judaism as well as philosophy, and the experience was described as θλῖψις, a deep distress.[23]

It is much more likely, however, that θλῖψις refers to the Thessalonians' experience when they became imitators of Paul and the Lord by receiving the word (1 Thess 1:6). If δεξάμενοι describes action contemporaneous with their becoming imitators,[24] as I think it does, it will be epexegetical, describing a correspondence between the modality of the

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[20] Whether Paul preached with "enthusiasm" and his message was received with ecstatic exclamations acknowledging God as their Father (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15) is debated. See the bibliography cited in Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 32 n. 111.

[21] See, e.g., Ernest Best, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistle to the Thessalonians* (London: A. & C. Black, 1972) 79. For the view that these θλίψεις are the eschatological sufferings of the righteous, according to Judaism (Mark 13:9; Matt 24:21), see H. Schlier, θλῖψις, *TDNT* 3.144–48; Raymond F. Collins, *Studies in the First Letter to the Thessalonians* (BETL 65; Leuven: University Press, 1984) 191–93, 291–93.

[22] See E. von Dobschütz, *Die Thessalonicher-Briefe* (KEKNT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1909) 73–74; Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 36–46; Rainer Riesner, *Die Frühzeit des Apostel Paulus: Studien zur Chronologie, Missionsstrategie und Theologie* (WUNT 71; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1994) 329–39.

[23] For proselytes, see *Joseph and Aseneth* 12.11; 13.11; E. Pax, "Beobachtungen zur Konvertitensprache im ersten Thessalonicherbrief," *Studii Biblici Franciscani Analecta* 21 (1971) 240–41. For philosophy, see Epictetus *Encheiridion* 24, and H. Schlier, θλῖψις, *TDNT* 3.139–40.

[24] Thus C. J. Ellicott, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1864) 10; von Dobschütz, *Die Thessalonicher-Briefe*, 73.

preaching and its attendant circumstances.[25] What Paul says about his preaching in Thessalonica casts light on the meaning of θλῖψις in 1:6.

Paul's ministry in Thessalonica was conducted "in the midst of a great struggle (ἐν πολλῷ ἀγῶνι," 1 Thess 2:2), which may have been a combination of external dangers and anxiety.[26] While in Thessalonica, Paul had forewarned his converts that it was their lot to suffer θλῖψις (1 Thess 3:4) and later had sent Timothy to exhort them not to be agitated by his afflictions (1 Thess 3:3; cf. v. 8, his ἀνάγκη καὶ θλῖψις, "anguish and distress").[27] He also uses θλίβεσθαι in 2 Cor 4:8–10 at the head of a list of hardships which describes his ministry. The other terms in the list suggest that he primarily has in mind internal distress.[28] Paul, therefore, uses θλῖψις of the personal distress he suffered in his ministry.

Paul's statement that his converts became imitators of him and the Lord finds further clarification from his demeanor and the content of his preaching, the reception of which caused them distress and joy. Paul elsewhere summarizes that content as Christ crucified (1 Cor 1:23; 2:2; Gal 3:1), who died for the sins of others (1 Cor 15:3). In his ministry, Paul himself suffered and endured (1 Cor 4:9–13; 2 Cor 6:3–10; 11:22–12:10), identifying fully with the death of Jesus as in distress he carried out his ministry (2 Cor 4:8–10). But Paul's distress was relieved by joy (2 Cor 7:4; 8:20), especially as he anticipated salvation (Phil 1:18–19); thus he at the same time experienced anxiety and joy (2 Cor 6:10; 7:4) as he preached.

Paul does not mention the cross in 1 Thessalonians, but his readers knew that Christ had died for their sake (5:10) and that their relationship with Paul had come into existence when the gospel of the self-giving

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[25] Anton Roosen, "Das Zeugnis des Glaubens in 1 Thessalonicher 1,6–10," *Studia Moralia* 15 (1977) 363.

[26] So already, Chrysostom *In epistolam I ad Thessalonicenses* 2 (PG 62:401).

[27] That ταύταις refers to Paul's rather than the Thessalonians' distress is the opinion of a long line of interpreters (e.g., Chrysostom *In epistolam I ad Thessalonicenses* 2 [PG 62:442]; von Dobschütz, *Die Thessalonicher-Briefe*, 134–35; T. Holtz, *Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher* [EKKNT 13; Zürich: Benziger, 1986] 135). Best (*A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians,* 135) thinks it refers to both.

[28] See John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (SBLDS 99; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 172–74.

Lord had become transparent in his life for their sake (1:5).[29] As an expression of his love for them, Paul gave to them in his preaching, not only the gospel, but himself by toiling laboriously night and day with his hands (2:8–9), an activity he thought, as did other people of his social level, to be burdensome (1 Cor 4:12), servile (1 Cor 9:19), and humiliating (2 Cor 11:7). By working in this manner, he provided a model for them to imitate (4:9; cf. 2 Thess 3:7–10). Their identification with this Paul and the Lord thus preached resulted in a mixture of distress and joy. Their distress would continue, as would Paul's (3:3–4), but so should their joy (5:16), Paul in this also providing them with an example to imitate (3:7–9).

". . . how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God"

In 1 Thess 1:9–10 Paul provides more information about the message to which the Thessalonians responded and reveals the sermonic context of his proclamation of Jesus. Paul is dependent on hellenistic-Jewish propaganda for much of this material, but he does not here present an outline of his own sermon to the Thessalonians, as is sometimes claimed.[30] More precisely, he summarizes what his converts had accepted and does so in a manner that focuses on God, in whom they had come to believe (v. 8). Paul does so already in the introductory reminder that they had converted to God from idols rather than in the traditional order, from idols to God (cf. Acts 14:15). He then continues chronologically, first describing God as living and true; then Jesus, who is awaited, is described in terms of his relationship to God, as his son and as raised from the dead by God; and he concludes with the affirmation of God's wrath from which Jesus delivers. All this was new to Paul's converts, and acceptance of his message required an intellectual reorientation in

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[29] See Franz Laub, *Eschatologische Verkündigung und Lebensgestaltung nach Paulus: Eine Untersuchung zum Wirken des Apostels beim Aufbau der Gemeinde in Thessalonike* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1973) 84.

[30] For the Jewish material, see Claus Bussmann, *Themen der paulinischen Missionspredigt auf dem Hintergrund der spätjüdisch-hellenistischen Missionsliteratur* (EH 23.3; 2d rev. ed.; Bern-Frankfurt: Lang, 1975). For the formulation of the preaching and its reception, see Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1962) 1.65–91, followed by others, e.g., Ulrich Wilckens, *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte: Form- und traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (WMANT 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1963) 81–91.

which they had to change their understanding of human nature and the obligations flowing from their new relationship to God, as well as a new view of the cosmic scheme of things. Every item in the summary had a strong moral component.

Philosophers also used the term ἐπιστρέφειν and its cognates to describe conversion as Paul does (v. 9), but their usage of the term was generally not as specific as it was in the use of the Stoic philosopher Epictetus, Paul's younger contemporary,[31] who is more representative of the philosophers with whom Paul had much in common. For a philosopher like Epictetus, conversion was a sobering up or coming to one's senses, a turning away from all human values and opinions and turning to oneself.[32] Philosophers might use traditional religious language such as turning to the divine in pursuit of wisdom or truth,[33] but they conceived of the enterprise in noble, humanistic terms, of a commitment to the rational life that would lead to virtue.

Paul's use of ἐπιστρέφειν, however, was informed by the Septuagint and later Jewish usage, where it describes turning to God. The word came to describe the conversion of Gentiles to Judaism, with a focus on God, whose nature may be reflected upon, as in *Joseph and Aseneth* 11.10–11, "But I have heard many saying that the God of the Hebrews is a true God and a living God (ἀληθινὸς . . . καὶ ζῶν;) . . . therefore I will take courage too and turn to him (ἐπιστρέψω πρὸς αὐτόν) and take refuge in him."[34] By Paul's time, ἐπιστρέφειν had become a technical Christian term for conversion, as appears from the only other two places in his letters where he uses it and plays on it (2 Cor 3:16; Gal 4:9). It is also used in this way in Acts (e. g., 3:19; 9:35; 11:21; 11:19).

How radically different this notion of conversion is from that of the philosophers appears from the statement that Paul's readers had turned, not from a false set of values or from a dissolute life, as the philosophers had it, but from idols (cf. Acts 14:15). For Jews, the worship of idols was the height of foolishness (Isa 44:9–20; Epistle of Jeremiah) and the cause of immorality (Wisd 14:12). Paul thought that idolatry was servitude to beings that were not gods (Gal 4:8–9) and, deflecting people

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[31] See Aubin, *Le problème de la "conversion,"* esp. 59–66, on Epictetus.

[32] Epictetus *Diss.* 3.16.15; 22.39; 23.16, 137; 4.4.7; cf. Lucian *Bis accusatus* 17; Marcus Aurelius *Meditationes* 9.42.

[33] Epictetus *Diss.* 2.20.22; cf. Ps.-Diogenes *Ep.* 34.1.

[34] See Ps 21:28; Isa 19:22; Jer 18:8, 11.

from the knowledge of God, had tragic moral consequences (Rom 1:18–32).

Conversion in response to Paul's preaching had two goals, expressed in complementary infinitives, to serve (δουλεύειν) and to wait (ἀναμένειν) (1 Thess 1:9–10). Service to God required total obedience, as a slave owed his master exclusive loyalty. This obedience to God was the aim of Paul's ministry; and when his listeners came to faith through his preaching, it could be said that they had obeyed the gospel.[35] As servitude to idols led to immorality, so, to Paul's mind, serving God required a moral, but more than a moral, a sanctified life, which was made possible by the knowledge of God that was offered in his preaching.[36]

The demand that one God, the Creator, the living God,[37] alone be served, was extraordinary in the Graeco-Roman world, where worshipping a number of gods was thought to increase one's security in this life and beyond. Indeed, in the popular view, the security of cities and states as of individuals depended on worshipping the traditional gods, particularly those related to certain areas, in special ways. When Christians refused to worship those gods, they were accused of atheism, of being the cause of society's misfortunes, and were sometimes executed as a consequence.[38] The commitment to the God Paul preached was thus psychologically and socially unsettling, and could be dangerous.

The second goal of conversion was eschatological, pointing to the divine dénouement, when God's son would deliver the Thessalonians from the divine wrath. Although the Greek tragedians and almost all philosophers criticized the anger of the gods of Greek myth, their very criticism testified to the widely held view that the gods' anger required expiation.[39] Paul's view, of course, was derived from Judaism, as is

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[35] See Rom 6:15–23 (cf. Matt 6:24; Luke 11:13); 10:16–17; 15:18 (cf. 16:18–19; 2 Cor 10:5–6).

[36] See Rom 6:16–23; 1 Thess 4:3–5 (cf. 1 Pet 1:14–16); 2 Cor 4:4–6.

[37] Acts 14:15, ". . . the living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them"; cf. Bel and the Dragon 5; see Mark J. Goodwin, "Conversion to the Living God in Diaspora Judaism and Paul's Letters" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1992).

[38] See, for example, Minucius Felix *Octavius* 8; Tertullian *Apol.* 40; cf. the references collected by G. W. Clarke, *The Octavius of Marcus Minucius Felix* (ACW 39; New York: Newman Press, 1974) 204–5. In this Christians were heirs to the Jews; cf. Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: The Israel Academy of Sciences and the Humanities, 1980) 2.545, for references.

[39] See Hermann Kleinknecht, ὀργή, *TDNT* 5.386–87.

evident from the apocalyptic traditions he uses in 1 Thess 2:16 in a way that assumes that his recent Greek converts in Thessalonica had been instructed by him about the certainty of God's judgment.

More important for our immediate purpose are two observations. First, Paul's instruction to the Thessalonians had promised divine vengeance on the sexually immoral (4:6) and, more generally, on the dissolute (5:1–10). Second, although he was emphatic about the certainty of God's wrath on the dissipated, he was equally emphatic about his converts' salvation from God's wrath by virtue of Christ's redeeming work (5:10; 1:10). We shall return to these matters but will first consider how striking the major themes in Paul's preaching must have been to his hearers.

In turning to God, they were required to change their understanding of the divine and service to him; they had to think anew of human nature, no longer in terms of human potentiality and virtue, but from a perspective of their relation to God and his will (4:1, 3); they had to reconstruct their view of a cosmic order to one that is under God's judgment while they themselves had a hope of deliverance from that judgment. And running through all of this new understanding was the theme of their moral responsibility. For Paul's contemporaries, on the other hand, morality was grounded otherwise, in philosophy, for example. There was not thought to be an essential connection between morality and religion, and in only a few unusual cases was a call to a moral transformation part of conversion.[40] This was not an easy connection for the Thessalonians to make, and Paul had to return to it when he wrote to them.[41]

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[40] Nock, *Conversion*, 138, 155; Wayne A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) 18–76. For philosophy as providing a rationale for morality, see Ps.-Plutarch *De liberis educandis* 7DE; Musonius Rufus, frgs. 8 and 16. The lack, or looseness, of a connection between pagan religion and morality is debated, but early Christian comment on the matter (e.g., by Lactantius *Divinae institutiones* 5.5.20), although apologetic, is no less credible for that. See J. H. W. Liebeschuetz, *Continuity and Change in Roman Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979) 265, 272–75.

[41] It is noteworthy, for example, that when Paul fills up what was lacking in the Thessalonians' faith (3:10), he introduces his detailed moral advice in chapters 4 and 5 with a reminder that he had taught them to please God (4:1) and then proceeds to describe the will of God, their sanctification (4:3). The stress Paul lays on the connection between Christian religion and morality appears from the twelve times that he in one way or another theologically undergirds his paraenesis in the first eight verses of chapter 4.

That his message was emotionally unsettling made his task all the more difficult.

". . . according to my gospel, God judges the hearts of men by Jesus Christ"

Paul expands in Rom 1:18–2:16 what he states succinctly in 1 Thess 1:6, 9–10 and confirms the exposition of his message that I have offered. This section of Romans makes use of hellenistic-Jewish propaganda and the philosophical traditions already used in that propaganda as Paul builds on his claim that the gospel is God's power to save (Rom 1:16).[42]

In developing his theme, Paul begins with a description of the human condition that demonstrates the need for the gospel of God's salvation. As in 1 Thess 1:9–10, he takes up, but now develops, the topics of the knowledge of God as Creator, idolatry, service to God, and divine judgment, but not deliverance from God's wrath. These early chapters of Romans lay the foundation for the following chapters of the letter, but the protreptic origin of his material shimmers through and provides hints about the nature of his missionary preaching.[43] The protreptic elements in Rom 1:18–2:16 add to our understanding of Paul's view of the human condition his preaching had in view and lends a keen edge to what follows.

Paul is quite different from the Stoic philosophers to whom he is ultimately indebted here in that he shows no interest in using the categories of natural theology to describe moral development that takes place in step with the development of reason. On the contrary, he begins with the emphatic claim that the knowledge of God is plain to them (1:19). Paul is not, in the first place, engaged in philosophical, nor even

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[42] See G. Bornkamm, *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969) 47–70; Malherbe, "The Apologetic Theology of the *Preaching of Peter*," *ResQ* 13 (1970) 205–23, for the Jewish and pagan philosophical materials and how they are used by Paul.

[43] An exponent of this view is Rudolf Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe* (FRLANT 13; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910; repr. 1984). Paul's use of the rhetorical device of the "diatribe" lends credence to this view, especially as it relates to Romans. For a more scholastic setting of the diatribe, see Stanley K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans* (SBLDS 57; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981). On the protreptic character of this section of Romans, see Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 97–109.

theological, exposition although he does provide a theological explanation for his claims. Rather he engages in an indictment that begins with a charge that divine wrath is already revealed against all ungodliness and wickedness of people who wilfully suppress the truth (1:18). He wants to render them without excuse (1:20; 2:1; cf. 2:15) and so make them subject to God's judgment (1:18; 2:2–6, 8, 16); hence he does not speak of salvation at this point in his argument.

Paul achieves this end by sketching a bleak picture of human wilfulness. Despite their knowledge of God, people did not honor or thank him (1:21), but became fools and practiced idolatry (1:22–23). They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and determined not to acknowledge God in their lives (1:25, 28), rejecting with full knowledge God's moral decrees (1:32). In all this, they think themselves superior: they judge others (2:1), presume on God's kindness, forbearance, and patience (2:4), and have hard and impenitent hearts (2:5).

Because of their wilful rejection of the Creator, God handed them over to sexual immorality (1:24, 26, 28), for the consequences of which they are responsible. They store up for themselves wrath on the day when God will judge them according to their works (2:5–8). Then they will experience inner turmoil (2:15–16), tribulation (θλῖψις), and distress (στενοχωρία) because they had done evil (2:8–9). That God will judge the secrets of people's hearts by Christ Jesus is, Paul says, according to his gospel (2:16). Paul here has in mind eschatological judgment, but he has said that God's eschatological wrath is already revealed (1:18), and the idea of eschatological events as presently realized finds expression in 1 Thessalonians (cf. 2:16; 5:3–7).[44]

It should be noted, however, that Paul's indictment is made in service of his thesis that the gospel is God's power to save (1:16). The offer of salvation was made in Paul's preaching and created a crisis for the person who heard it: it demanded a decision that could not be delayed (2 Cor 6:1–2), a choice between destruction and salvation (2 Cor 2:14–17) which was bound to cause stress. The good news was that acceptance of the gospel of Christ's vicarious death and resurrection enabled believers to rejoice in the θλίψεις that would follow, knowing that they would be saved by Christ from God's wrath (Rom. 4:24–25; 5:3, 9).

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[44] Cf. James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (WBC 38; Dallas: Word, 1998) 1.102, ". . . it is characteristic of Paul's thought that there is a continuity between present and future, with regard to both justification . . . and to divine wrath."

Paul had preached such a gospel in Thessalonica. He had offered his listeners a knowledge of God the Creator (1:9) which made possible, indeed, required, a sanctified life (4:4). He also told them of the coming judgment (1:9; 4:6), which already impinged on their lives, requiring them to live morally (5:3–5). The culmination of the message was that Christ had died for them as part of God's design to save them (5:9) and deliver them from his wrath (1:10). When they accepted this gospel, they did so with a combination of distress and joy (1:6).

Conclusion

We must understand better the ways in which Paul was indebted to the moral philosophers of his day if we are to gain a firmer grasp of how he expressed himself to his Greek readers. Paul spoke in terms natural to the context in which he and they lived, and in each case it must be determined whether his philosophical terminology was merely the affectation of the σπερμολόγος the philosophers in Athens thought he was (Acts 17:18), or whether it was for him the natural way to express matters of the greatest importance. The latter generally seems to have been the case, and it clearly was so on those occasions when he was required to engage his converts philosophically when they expressed themselves in philosophical categories natural to themselves. What complicates the matter is that on even such occasions his discussion was governed by basic theological convictions which gave a new cast to the philosophical claims under review.[45]

That was also the case with Paul's view of conversion. A cursory view reveals many similarities to philosophic conversion: Conversion is the response to a speech by someone who calls for a radical reassessment of one's existential condition and who demands a commitment to a rational existence—an emotionally destabilizing experience. In the process, the philosopher who summons his hearers to conversion *de facto* exemplifies his message and the values he is inculcating.[46]

By focusing on one element of the Thessalonians' conversion experience, however, we have been able to see how Paul, while using the

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[45] See Malherbe, "Determinism and Free Will in Paul: The Argument of 1 Corinthians 8 and 9," in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context* (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995) 231–55.

[46] See Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 52–53; *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, 57–58.

same rubrics as the philosophers did, invests them with a radically different content. His converts' distress and joy are not the result of discovering their moral inadequacies in comparison with a rational life of virtue held out to them; nor is their imitation of Paul and the Lord an acceptance of paradigms of the rational life. Rather, Paul and Jesus represent lives of self-giving, in the course of which Paul experiences distress and joy.

Paul's converts had the same experience when they were brought to an understanding of their own condition before God. The deep distress that their moral condition, thus revealed, causes is at the same time compensated for by the good news that, although they had been destined for θλίψεις" (3:3–4), they had not been destined for God's wrath (5:9–10), but would be saved from it by God's son (1:10). That was cause for joy.

THE *CHREIA* IN THE DESERT: RHETORIC AND THE BIBLE IN THE *APOPHTHEGMATA PATRUM*

Kathleen McVey

The relation of early Christian monasticism to the biblical tradition is a subject of interest not only to scholars but also to ecumenical theologians of many stripes. For many Protestants monasticism is rendered problematic both by theological commitment to the classic Reformation themes represented by the slogans *sola fide* and *sola Scriptura* and by the historical fact that the principal Protestant Reformers vehemently rejected the institution of medieval monasticism. Yet there is broad general interest today in Christian spirituality—an interest that touches Protestants as well as other Christians. On the other hand, Orthodox, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Christians, who continue to esteem the monastic heritage, have a renewed interest in the study of Scripture. Not only the desire for better mutual understanding but also the inner theological dynamics of all the churches have focussed attention on the classics of early monastic literature as well as on the more developed forms of mystical piety and their concomitant literature. In the light of Professor Everett Ferguson's contributions to the ecumenical enterprise of scholarly research in the history of early Christianity, this is a fitting subject to explore in this essay in his honor.

A recent treatment of the relation between the Bible and early Christian monasticism contends that a profound commitment to the study of the Bible and the internalization of its teachings constitute the central themes of life in the desert.[1] Certain questions follow from this assertion: Which parts of the Bible were emphasized by the early monks and which were neglected? Which of the many literary genres to be found in Scripture were most congenial to the mothers and fathers of the desert? The omnipresence of the Psalms is evident to the most casual reader of the desert literature, and the impact of the Beatitudes has been persuasively demonstrated.[2] Near Eastern Wisdom literature, both within

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[1] Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[2] L. Regnault, "The Beatitudes in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*," *Eastern Churches Review* 6 (1974) 23–43.

and without the bounds of canonical Scripture, provides fruitful parallels to the wisdom of the desert.[3] I will argue here that, like the literary conventions of the Wisdom literature, Greco-Roman rhetorical devices constitute an illuminating cross-cultural bridge between the Bible and the *Apophthegmata Patrum*.[4] Specifically, the *chreia*, a device well known to ancient rhetoricians and their audiences, provides a useful lens for viewing the *AP* and for understanding the role of the Bible in their composition.

The *progymnasmata*, or handbooks, which delineated the methods of literary composition from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine periods, define the *chreia* as a terse statement, an illustrative action, or a combination of word and act, which is attributed to a particular person and which has a clear and edifying application to everyday life. These handbooks also provide elementary exercises designed to familiarize students with basic rhetorical devices and to develop their skill in composing and modifying them. In his *Progymnasmata*, Hermogenes (2d or 3d century CE) lists, defines, and prescribes exercises for twelve basic literary forms in order of ascending difficulty.[5] Since the *chreia* is third in his treatment, it is manifestly an elementary device that would be familiar even to the least skilled student of Greek rhetoric.

Although the impact of the Greek rhetorical tradition on Hellenized but largely Coptic-speaking Roman Egypt is not certain, some interaction at the level of basic literacy is plausible. Rhetorical training was fundamental to education in the Greco-Roman world; the literacy and eloquence that flowed from it were fundamental to social and political advancement. The *chreia* form and the rudimentary rhetorical education

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[3] F. von Lilienfeld, "Die christliche Unterweisung der *Apophthegmata Patrum*," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 20 (1971) 85–110. R. Frazer, *The Morphology of Desert Wisdom in the Apophthegmata Patrum* (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1977).

[4] Examples introduced here from the *Apophthegmata Patrum* are from the Greek text of the alphabetical collection *Monumenta Ecclesiae Graecae*, vol. 3 (ed. Jean Baptiste Cotelier; Paris: Muguet, 1677; repr. in J.-P. Migne, *PG* 65:71–440; supplemented by Jean-Claude Guy, *Recherches sur la tradition grecque des Apophthegmata Patrum*, Subsidia Hagiographica 36 [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1962]). For comprehensive introduction to the various versions of the *apophthegmata*, tables, and accepted numeration, cf. Louis Regnault, *Les sentences des pères du désert*, 4 vols (Sablé-sur-Sarthe: Solesmes, 1976–85). For further literature on the *AP*, cf. Burton-Christie, 305–321, et passim.

[5] Hermogenis *Opera*, (ed. Hugo Rabe; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1919). Further, cf. Henri Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (trans. George Lamb; New York: New American Library, 1956).

presupposed by its ready usage are uniquely suited to a culture, such as the early Egyptian monastic society, poised on the boundary between oral culture and literacy. Examples of the *chreia* culled from Scripture, especially from the gospels, might serve as the daily bread of the monastic rumination. Like the student of elementary grammar and composition, the monk might ponder, rephrase, and recast sayings gleaned from the Bible, perhaps sayings heard in a liturgical context and carried off for lengthy solitary contemplation.[6] This process might then be repeated by the gatherers and revisors of early monastic traditions, those who culled the sayings or actions of the desert fathers and mothers, put them into written form to be handed down and cast and recast now in written form. If this hypothetical picture is valid, then rhetorical analysis of the monastic apophthegmata, particularly as they incorporate phrases, images, and ideas from Scripture, will give us an insight into the mind of the transmitters of desert wisdom and perhaps even into the reflections of the *ammas* and *abbas* themselves.

To examine the *chreia* as an example of rhetoric in the desert, we begin with Hermogenes' handbook.[7] He divides *chreiai* into three formal categories: spoken (λογικαί), enacted (πρακτικαί), and mixed (μικταί). The spoken have a saying (λόγος) alone, as for example: "Plato said the Muses dwell in the souls of the well-endowed (εὐφυῶν)." The enacted depict only a deed (πρᾶξις), as for example: "Diogenes, seeing an undisciplined boy, struck his teacher." The mixed contain both saying and deed, as: "Diogenes, seeing an undisciplined boy, struck his teacher, saying, 'Why have you taught him such behavior?'" After noting that conciseness is a hallmark of the *chreia*, Hermogenes sets forth a seven-part outline of a composition to be written, committed to memory, and recited by the student to demonstrate mastery of the form: (1) praise of the protagonist of the *chreia*, (2) paraphrase of its significance, (3) proof of its validity, (4) contrast with invalid, contrary propositions, (5) illustration by a general comparison, (6) example using a specific well-known person, (7) confirmation by citation of an authority, such as Homer or Hesiod. The student is to end with an exhortation to persuade the listener that the saying or action is worthy of imitation.

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[6] As Burton-Christie suggests, 117ff.

[7] Rabe, esp. 6–8. Further, cf. Donald L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957) esp. 186–87; George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963) esp. 270ff.

The literature of early monasticism contains many examples of provocatively instructive sayings and dramatic actions attributed to the great desert ascetics. These fit well under the rhetorical definition of the *chreia*. For example, a story of Moses the Black exemplifies the "mixed" type of *chreia*:

> Once at Scetis a brother sinned. They convened a meeting and sent for Abba Moses. He would not go. So the priest [πρεσβύτερος] sent for him saying, 'Come, for the people are waiting for you.' He got up and went. He took a basket with holes in it [σπυρίδα τετρήμενην], filled it with sand, and carried it. Those who came out to meet him said to him, "What is this, Father?" The old man said to them, "My sins are streaming down behind me, and I do not see them, but *I* have come today to judge the sins of another." Having heard, they said nothing to the brother but forgave him.[8]

His memorable action is confirmed and interpreted by his statement. Together they constitute an unforgettable lesson against judging others. Although a few narrative details have been added to frame the *chreia*, the fuller exercise prescribed by Hermogenes is not in evidence here. His instructions to provide illustrative examples and reinforce the authority of the *chreia* might easily have been followed by quoting Jesus' admonitions against judging, for example, Matt 7:1–5 and parallels. Instead, the image of Moses and his words stand in austere eloquence; the obvious is not explained or spelled out. The apophthegm shows awareness of the rhetorical form, but it is not a rhetorical exercise as if taken from a student's copybook.

Rhetorical critics of the NT have drawn attention to the *chreia* as a literary type. As a result, NT pericopes formerly designated variously as apophthegms, paradigms, pronouncement stories, or anecdotes are commonly classified as *chreiai*,[9] thus raising the possibility that the monastic writers derived their use of this form directly from examples in the NT. This does not provide an adequate explanation of the use of the form in the *AP*. A few examples will show that the *chreia* does play a role in moving from Bible to *AP*, but the process is less straightforward and more provocative than one might expect. That is, there are many ways in which the *chreia* as a rhetorical device has been fused with Biblical materials to produce vividly memorable *apophthegmata*. I propose that dividing these literary transformations into two

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[8] Moses 2 (= Regnault, 496), trans. Ward, 117.

[9] For a succinct overview of the issues and the literature, see Vernon K. Robbins, "Apophthegm," and Ronald F. Hock, "Chreia," in *ABD* 1.307–9, 912–14.

broad types and then analyzing them in turn will help us to understand the process of composition. The broad types are (1) stylistic and (2) semantic.

Stylistic transformations of Biblical literature into monastic *chreiai* are of two sorts: (a) by transfer and (b) by invention. The *apophthegm* created by transfer begins within its original Scriptural context as a *chreia*; it make take any one of Hermogenes' three types: spoken, enacted, or mixed. The biblical saying or deed is simply transferred into a new *chreia* in which the *abba* or *amma* takes center stage. For example: Abba John of the Thebaid said, "First of all the monk ought above all to achieve meekness. For it is the first commandment of the Lord, who said: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'" (Matt 5:3).[10] In the invention type, by contrast, the biblical text has no literary resemblance to the *chreia*, but the monastic redactor creates one. He begins with a suitable quotation such as a sentence from a Pauline letter or a narrative centered on a major figure such as Moses, Joseph, or Job. From this he constructs a *chreia* grounded in a lesson or an exemplary person in the Bible. For example:

> Abba John said, "Who sold Joseph?" And a brother answered, saying, "His brothers." The old man said to him, "No, rather his humility sold him. For he could have said, 'I am their brother' and have argued. But, being silent, he sold himself by humility; humility also established him as ruler in Egypt."[11]

In either type of stylistic transformation, the desert editor may introduce variations based on Hermogenes' classification. What had been a spoken *chreia* may be transformed into an enacted or mixed one. Abba John the Short, for example, began with the Lucan parable about the dangers of sitting in the place of honor at a banquet (Luke 14:7-11). Keeping only the last half of the final saying, "Everyone who humbles himself will be exalted,"[12] he prefaces it with the story of "a spiritual old

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[10] John of the Thebaid 2 (Regnault, 408) *PG* 65:233D. Allusions to the NT have been compared with the text presented in *The Greek New Testament* (ed. Kurt Aland et al., 2d ed.; Stuttgart: Würtemberg Bible Society, 1968). If, as here, the *apophthegm* quotes the NT text without change, no comment will be made. For another example of the transfer type of stylistic transformation, cf. also John the Eunuch 1 (Regnault, 401) *PG* 65:232D–233A.

[11] John the Short, 20 (Regnault, 335), trans. Ward, 77; cf. also Evagrius 7 (Regnault, 233), trans. Ward, 54–55.

[12] The NT quotation is almost unchanged: Πᾶς . . . ὁ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται.

man" who tried to avoid celebrity for his good deeds by visiting an old man on the point of death under cover of night. Despite his careful efforts he was brought to universal attention by angels who lit his way. This new version of the NT *chreia* ends with the words: "The more he was determined to avoid fame, the more famous he became. By these events that which is written was fulfilled 'Everyone who humbles himself will be exalted.'"[13] This is still a mixed *chreia*, but while the saying has remained essentially the same, the action has changed completely.

In one particularly memorable story told about Macarius the Great, an enacted *chreia* is supplemented with verses from both the NT and the OT:

> The same Abba Macarius, being in Egypt, found a man who had a beast of burden [κτῆνος], and who was stealing his things. He, as if he were a stranger, assisted the thief in loading the beast, and with utter tranquility [μετὰ πολλῆς ἡσυχίας] he sent him forth saying, "'We have brought nothing into the world; it is clear that neither can we take anything out' (1 Tim 6.7). 'The Lord gave; as He wished, so it was. Blessed is the Lord over all.'" (Cf. LXX Job 1:21b)[14]

The Pauline quotation is drawn from a lengthy pastoral discussion, but the original context of Job's exclamation is virtually a *chreia*.[15] Thus this monastic *chreia* is of the "mixed" type and consists of a newly created "enacted" portion (the story of Macarius's remarkable behavior) to which two biblical sayings have been added—the first (1 Tim 6:7) by the process here termed invention, the second (Job 1:21b) by transfer. As one final example of the variations to be detected by attending to Hermogenes' classifications as we also note the use of Scripture, we can return to Abba Moses with his leaking basket.[16] In this case a general

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[13] Καὶ ὅσον ἔδοξε θεύγειν τὴν δόξαν, πλέον ἐδοξάσθη. Ἐν τούτοις πληροῦται τὸ γεγραμμένον· πᾶς . . . ὁ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται. John the Short, 38 (Regnault, 353) *PG* 65:216D–217A.

[14] Macarius the Great, 18 (Regnault, 471) *PG* 65:269C. The allusion to Job 1:21 differs from the LXX: ὁ Κύριος ἔδωκεν, ὡς αὐτὸς ἠθέλησεν, οὕτως καὶ ἐγένετο· Εὐλογητὸς Κύριος ἐπὶ πᾶσιν. Cf. LXX: ὁ κύριος ἔδωκεν, ὁ κύριος ἀφείλατο· ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ ἔδοξεν, οὕτως καὶ ἐγένετο· εἴη τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου εὐλογημένον. Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX interpretes* (Stuttgart: Würtemberg Bible Society, 1935) 2.274.

[15] The use of Job here and in many other of the *AP* underlines the difficulty of distinguishing this rhetorical form from the Wisdom literature. I cannot give this issue adequate discussion here.

[16] At note 8 above.

lesson from the NT—against judgment of others—is used to produce a mixed *chreia* without any direct quotation of the NT.

The second broad division I have proposed here, semantic transformation, is more complex. The literary manipulation of the biblical text may seem merely to reiterate in a new style the transparent message of a given scriptural story or passage. Both the new literary context and the changed historical setting inevitably modify the message. Although an entire spectrum of semantic changes might be documented, it will be sufficient to consider three types: (a) affirmative, (b) contradictory, and (c) allegorical.

For the first type, the affirmative use, Athanasius's *Life of Antony* provides an illustration. The story of the rich young man (Mark 10:17–22 par.) is one of eleven pericopes for which there is a clear and long-standing consensus among NT scholars that the *chreia* is clearly the underlying literary form.[17] It is well known that in his *vita* Athanasius portrays the famous proto-monk as initially motivated by this example along with three others drawn from the NT, namely, the behavior of the apostles who "left everything" to follow Christ and of the apostolic community in Acts 4:32–37, and the logion against anxiety, a *chreia* that completes the pericope on "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field" (Matt 6:25–34 par.). In each case the scriptural passage is identified by a single saying or action which Antony applies to himself, immediately putting it into effect. According to Athanasius, Antony came from a propertied Egyptian Christian family. His parents died when he was eighteen years old, leaving him to care for his younger sister. Six months later, while walking to church,

> he collected his thoughts and reflected how the apostles left everything and followed the Savior, also how the people in Acts sold what they had and laid it at the feet of the apostles for distribution among the needy and what great hope is laid up in heaven for such as these. With these thoughts in mind he entered the church. And it so happened that the Gospel was being read at that moment and he heard the passage in which the Lord says to the rich man: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor; and come, follow me and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven." As though God had put him in mind of the saints and as though the reading had been directed especially to him, Antony immediately left the church and gave to the townspeople the property he had from his forebears—three

[17] Robbins, 308.

> hundred arurae, very fertile and beautiful to see. He did not want it to encumber himself or his sister in any way whatever. He sold all the rest, the chattels they had, and gave the tidy sum he received to the poor, keeping back only a little for his sister.
> But once again as he entered the church, he heard the Lord saying in the Gospel: "Be not solicitous for the morrow." He could not bear to wait longer, but went out and distributed those things also to the poor.[18]

Thus began the first phase of Antony's ascetic life. From the viewpoint of the literary analyst, Athanasius has recognized in the scriptural account of the "rich young man" an example of the *chreia*. He has added to it brief allusions to other exemplary actions and pregnant sayings from the NT, in effect reducing these other narratives to a *chreia* form. Finally he has inserted all of these into a story about Antony which itself is a slightly longer and more complex version of the *chreia*—a series of vivid acts and sayings which precipitate Antony's own dramatic act of renunciation. Athanasius presents his hero as applying to himself the *logion,* or *chreia,* attributed to Jesus. The reader of the *vita* is implicitly invited to do the same. The statement originally attributed to Jesus remains at the center of the story of Antony; it continues to function as the indelible and succinct key to the lesson of the new monastic story. Thus we may call this an affirmative transformation of the biblical *chreia.*

There are other possibilities. For example, a pithy saying from the NT may be re-used, but where it had been the climax of the original story, it may become the starting or midway point en route to a new monastic lesson; the new message may be a significant modification or even a contradiction of the original. In this case we have a contradictory transformation. A radical example of this type is provided by the fifth saying of Silvanus and its use of John 6:27 and especially Luke 10:42. Here scriptural *logia* are quoted but finally contradicted by the monastic saying which completes the revised *chreia*:

> A brother approached Abba Sylvanus at Mount Sinai, and seeing the brothers working, he said to the old man, "Do not work for perishable food"

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[18] *Vita Antonii* 2–3, *PG* 26:835–976, esp. 841B–845A; here quoted from St. Athanasius *The Life of Saint Antony*, trans. Robert T. Meyer, Ancient Christian Writers 10 (New York: Newman Press, 1950; repr. Paulist, 1978) 19–20.

(cf. John 6:27).[19] "For Mary has chosen the good part" (Luke 10:42). The old man said to his disciple, "Zachary, give the brother a book and take him to an empty cell." So when it was the ninth hour he was intent on the door to see whether perhaps they would send someone to call him to the meal. But since no one called him he got up, went to find the old man and said to him, "Did the brothers not eat today?" The old man said to him, "Because you are a spiritual man and do not need that kind of food. We, being fleshly, want to eat, and because of that we work. But you have chosen the good part, reading all day, and you do not want to eat fleshly food." When he had heard these things he made a bow of apology, saying, "Forgive me, abba." The old man said to him, "Mary certainly needs Martha, too. For by means of Martha, Mary is extolled."[20]

Here the quotations of Scripture, especially Luke 10:42, have been overturned. Whereas in its original context the statement that Mary has chosen the "good part" is the climax of the pericope, here it serves as a starting point, and the new *apophthegm* is a contradiction or at least a considerable nuancing of the scriptural *apophthegm*: "Mary certainly needs Martha, too. For by means of Martha, Mary is extolled."

The third type of semantic transformation, the allegorical, is to be found when the brief scriptural quotation which is at the center of the monastic *apophthegm* is given an allegorical sense. The allegorical interpretations themselves range from a moderately transformative reading of scriptural metaphor to a monastic reading that differs radically from the apparent meaning of the original scriptural text.[21] Abba Agathon provides an example of the moderately transformative allegorical use:

Abba Agathon was asked, "Which is better, bodily toil or interior control [ὁ σωματικὸς κόπος, ἢ ἡ φυλακὴ τῶν ἔνδον]? The old man said, "People resemble trees: bodily toil is the foliage, but interior control is the fruit. But since according to that which is written, "Every tree that does not produce good fruit is to be cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10), it is clear that all our concern is to be for the fruit, that is, control of the mind.

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[19] *Μὴ ἐργάζεσθε* τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην, subtly shifting the emphasis by reversing the order of the first words of John 6:27a: *Ἐργάζεσεε μὴ* τὴν βρῶσιν τὴν ἀπολλυμένην.

[20] Silvanus, 5 (Regnault, 860), *PG* 65:409C–D.

[21] For discussion of the dynamic power of allegorical language, cf. David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

> But the shelter and adornment of the foliage are also necessary; these are the bodily toil."[22]

Agathon gives specific monastic import to Jesus' metaphorical language. Yet the themes of judgment, repentance, and vigilance, central to his interpretation, are also evident in the synoptic use of the *logion* (Matt 3:7–10, Luke 3:7–9). Matthew and Luke, moreover, differ subtly yet significantly in their situation of this pericope: in Luke it is an address to the multitude; in Matthew it is a castigation of the Pharisees and Sadducees. In this framework the monastic allegory is within a defensible range of hermeneutical possibilities. Another illustration of allegorical transformation of a scriptural quotation is more far-fetched:

> A brother said to Abba Cronius, "Speak a word to me." And he said to him, "When Elisha came to the Shunamite, he did not find her occupied with anyone else. So she conceived and gave birth through the arrival of Elisha" (2 Kings 4:8–17). The brother said to him, "What is [the meaning of] this saying? And the old man said, "The soul—if she is sober and withdraws from distraction and abandons her own desires—then the Spirit of God enters her, and she is able to conceive because she is not yet pregnant [στεῖρά]."[23]

Given the general context of fourth-century allegorical interpretation of Scripture, it is not difficult to imagine how Abba Cronius arrived at his reading. Clearly, though, the story of Elisha, as encapsulated in his words, has been given a wholly new sense.

In this brief survey, I have used rhetorical analysis to probe the stylistic and semantic variations used to transform scriptural materials into monastic apophthegmata. Like the ancient rhetors, I believe that analytical division of the subject matter provides a valuable heuristic device. I have posited a distinction between stylistically and semantically significant manipulations of the scriptural text. Within each of these categories, further distinctions have been defined and illustrated: (1) stylistic transformations (a) by transfer and (b) by invention; (2) semantic transformations which are (a) affirmative, (b) contradictory, or (c) allegorical. My purpose here has been to ponder the early monastic manipulations of Scripture *as a literary text.* I have assumed that, as we see them in the *AP*, the early monks searched the Bible for support and inspiration for their way of life and for solutions to difficulties

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[22] Agathon, 8 (Regnault, 90) *PG* 65:112B.

[23] Cronius, 1 (Regnault, 435) *PG* 65:248A.

encountered along the way. I have further assumed that their social location on the boundary between a highly sophisticated, literate Greco-Roman culture and a largely illiterate Coptic peasant society made the simple rhetorical device of the *chreia* singularly useful. It provided a capsule into which biblical narratives and lessons could be compressed and transported into the desert, so to speak, for reinterpretation and creative theological play. Their selective and intuitive use of Scripture was informed by the literary and theological notions of their time. In evaluating their efforts as well as in our attempts at ecumenical understanding, we could do worse than to listen one last time to the wisdom of Abba John the Short:

> Abba Poemen said that Abba John said that the saints resemble an orchard [παραδείσῳ] of trees, having different fruits, but watered by the same rain [ὕδατος]. For the practice of this saint is one way and that of another is otherwise, but there is one Spirit working in them all.[24]

[24] John the Short, 43 (Regnault, 958), trans. Ward, 81.

ENCYCLOPEDIA REVISITED

Frederick W. Norris

Among the different genres which Everett Ferguson has employed in his scholarly work is encyclopedia. He is the editor of the *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, which has now gone into its second edition.[1]

The attempt to gather up the general knowledge considered necessary for the educated is an old one in Western culture. Speusippos, the son of Plato's sister, followed the lead of his uncle in looking for ways to unveil truth to those who sought it. One of his contributions, as the immediate successor of Plato in the Academy, was to bring together various aspects of natural history, mathematics, philosophy, and other disciplines into a single work. Only a series of fragments remain, but the effort seems to be the first.[2]

The modern sense of what an encyclopedia should be, however, has taken centuries to acquire its present shape. In the eleventh century the *Suda* introduced an alphabetical arrangement of entries.[3] What might be referred to as a modern Western scientific encyclopedia emerged in the fourteenth century when the anonymous *Compendium philosophiae* appeared. It began with theology, depended heavily on Aristotle's classifications of things in nature and concentrated on the distinguishing characteristics of what it describes. It is marked by the absence of many medieval tales and the presence of judicious attempts to sift its sources.[4]

The word "encyclopedia" has a rather strange history. Pliny the Elder, whose *Historia naturalis* was itself a major encyclopedic achievement, tells us that Greeks employed *egkuklios paideia* as shorthand for

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[1] *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson, assoc. eds. Michael McHugh and Frederick Norris (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990; 2d ed., 1997).

[2] Friedrich Lang, *De Speusippi academici scriptis; accedunt fragmenta* (Bonn: C. Georg, 1911).

[3] *Suda* (Lexicographi Graeci 1, 5 vols., ed. Ada Adler; Stuttgart: Teubner, 1928, repr. 1967–71).

[4] Michel de Boüard, *Une nouvelle encyclopédie médiévale: le Compendium Philosophiae* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1936) offered a study of the work, but there is as yet no critical edition. The full title is *Compendium philosophiae: compilacio de libris naturalibus Aristotilis, et aliorum quorumdam philosophorum de rerum natura.*

a sense of well-rounded learning or introductory education.[5] Quintilian uses the phrase to speak of general education.[6] It appears in Philo, Pseudo-Plutarch, Strabo, and scholia on Aristophanes.[7] Christians such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Byzantine Anna Comnena employed it or a similar phrase.[8] The *Suda* offers a definition of it under its listings for *egkuklion*.[9]

The first use of *egkuklios paideia* as one word, *egkuklopaideion*, is difficult to establish. Liddell/Scott mentions that there are false readings in the texts of Quintilian and Pliny which turned the two-word phrase into one word.[10] Their judgment is confirmed by the fact that Sophocles has no such usage recorded for the Roman and Byzantine periods and more importantly that the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* does not contain that word or the word *kuklopaideion*.[11]

Thomas Elyot's *The Governor*, published in 1531, seems to contain the first use of the term in English:

> Wherfore in as moche as in an oratour is required to be a heape of all maner of lernyng: whiche of some is called the worlde of science, of other the circle of doctrine, which is in one worde of greke *Encyclopedia;* therfore at this day may be founden but a very few oratours.[12]

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[5] Pliny *HN* preface 14.

[6] Quintilian *Inst* 1.10.1.

[7] Philo *De congress.* 72, 73, 154; *De Post. Cain.* 137; Strabo *Geographica* 14.5.13.2; *Scholia in Aristophanem, Nomina aetatum,* Sch. eq. 188a2, 189a1, 2. Diogenes Laertius, *Vita philosophorum,* speaks of *egkuklion paideuma* (2.79) and *egkuklios paideia* (7.32); The *Vitae Oppiani* 5.5, 6.4 employ *egkuklios paideusis.* Chrysippus (*SVF* 224) and passages in Philo (*De cong.* 9, 35 and *De fuga et inventione* 183, 213) use *egkuklion propaideuma.*

[8] Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* 1.19.93.5.1; Origen *Contra Celsum* 1.29.15; Anna Comnena *Historia* 15.7.3.10; Gregory of Nazianzus *Or. 43, Funebris oratio in laudem Basilii Magni* 12.2.10; and Gregory of Nyssa *Or. 33, Contra Arianos et de seipso* 3.7 use the phrase *egkuklios paideusis.*

[9] *Suda* Epsilon #133 (ed. Adler) 2.198.

[10] LSJ (1968) 474.

[11] E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914; repr.: Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1975); Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Aquitier with William A. Johnson, *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae CD Rom #D* (Irvine, CA: TLG Project—University of California, 1992).

[12] Thomas Elyot, *The Bok Named the Governour* (London: In edibus Tho. Bertheleti, MDXXXI) chap. 13. I consulted the reprinted 1883 edition of the reproduced original by Henry Herbert Stephen Croft (2 vols.; Burt Franklin: Research and Source Works Series No. 165, Essays in History, Economics, & Social Science No. 14; New York: Burt Franklin, 1967) 1.118–19.

He appears to depend upon the wrong reading of the early reference in Quintilian as if it were one word.[13] The Greek rooted "Cyclopaedia" was first included in 1541 in the title of Ringelbergh's *Lucubrationes*.[14] The Latin "encyclopaedia" appears first as the defining word in the title of Paul Scalich's 1559 work.[15] Even then there was a struggle to see if "encyclopedia" would be better able to hold the field against the word "dictionary,"[16] a contest which continues at the end of the twentieth century.

Two Central Concerns

One modern misconception of what an encyclopedia is must be contested. Even this confined genre does not present learning on the basis of totally objective foundations or limits. Perhaps the best example of the deeply involved character of an encyclopedia is that of the French encyclopedists. Diderot is often considered the father of modern efforts, but his selection and editing was so provocative (biased?) in the eyes of the Roman Church and his publishers that only an edition heavily censored in the later volumes by church authorities ever appeared. Diderot demanded that his judgments be honored and that another edition be published without the editorial interference, but to date there is no evidence that his publishers granted him his wishes.[17]

A second issue appears in this context. Contemporary discussions of religious pluralism, which deeply influence the construction of nearly

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[13] He clearly is translating "Orbis ille doctrinae, quam Graeci *egkuklion paideian* vocant" from Quintilian *Inst.* 1.10.1.

[14] Joachim Sterck van Ringelbergh, *Lucubrationes, vel potius absolutissima kuklopaideia, nempe liber de ratione studii. . .* (Basle: Westhemer, 1541).

[15] Paul Scalich, *Encyclopaedia, seu Orbis disciplinarum, tum sacrarum quam prophanum Epitome. . .* (Basle: J. Oporinus, 1559).

[16] The various claims in this section for an encyclopedic work's being "the first" are taken from Robert Collison, *Encyclopedias: Their History throughout the Ages* (2d ed.; New York: Hafner, 1966) a chart on pages xiii–xiv; discussions of Speusippos, 21–22; the *Suda*, 46–47; the *Compendium philosophiae*, 67–68; Ringelberg, 78, 80; Scalich, 79–80; and the battle between "encyclopedia" and "dictionary," 80.

[17] Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences*, 17 vols. of text, 11 vols. of plates (Paris: André Le Breton, 1751–72). A new critical, annotated edition of Diderot, *Œuvres Complètes*, vols. 1–11, 13–16, 17–20, 23, 25, directed by H. Dieckmann, J. Proust and J. Varloot (Paris: Hermann, 1975–) is being issued. A. M. Wilson, *Diderot* (New York: Oxford, 1972), describes Diderot's problems with the Roman Catholic Church, Le Breton, and others.

all encyclopedias of religion, will be enhanced if one rather common observation about the period covered by the *EEC* is challenged. There is only limited truth in the claim that all our discussions in the present represent a totally changed situation of pluralism which Christianity has not previously experienced. There are definitely new circumstances, including the recognition of a number of twentieth-century religions, particularly rooted in the East, as vital, compelling global communities. At the same time it is important to note that Christianity grew up in a remarkably pluralistic religious climate, originally as a threatened minority. In the second half of the second century CE, Maximus of Tyre estimated that there were about 30,000 different gods in the Mediterranean area.[18] That is considerably more than the number suggested in most surveys of non-Christian, non-Jewish Graeco-Roman religions taught even at the graduate level. It relates well to Pausanias's attempt to treat each temple site in Greece as of distinct importance.[19]

We know from Apuleius and other sources such as the emperor Julian that major gods or goddesses were viewed as appearing in different places under different names.[20] But local variations were often of consequence. For a god as central to the Greek and Roman pantheons as Zeus, it is often difficult to decide whether the most important local reality is the second name given that god in that place or the name "Zeus," which appears to unite it with other temples of Zeus.[21]

Frank Trombley has also demonstrated that even the establishment of Christianity by Constantine and its legal status as the religion of the Roman empire in the law codifications of Theodosius and Justinian does not mean that so-called paganism disappeared as viable religions. He particularly used hagiography well in showing that a number of Christianity's honored Mediterranean bishops spent much of their time

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[18] Maximus of Tyre *Or.* 11.12.

[19] Pausanias *Periēgēsis tēs Ellados*. For an interesting sense of this in relation to art, see Jaś Elsner, *Art and the Roman Viewer: The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity* (Cambridge Studies in New Art History and Criticism; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 127–55.

[20] Apuleius *Metamorphoses* has Isis tell of her many apparitions. Julian's *Eis ton Basileia Hēlion pros Saloustion* depends upon his sense of the power of that god to lie behind a number of local cults as the one high deity.

[21] A. B. Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* (repr. New York: Biblo & Tanner, 1964–65) is organized around the unity but gives clear indications of local diversity.

attempting to destroy cultic practices in high places and cemeteries throughout the period covered by the *EEC*.[22]

Now with the shifting boundaries of studies on early Christianity that include contacts with major Eastern religions outside the Mediterranean region, we can offer in the second edition of the *EEC* material for modern discussions within the setting of religious pluralism. That evidence represents not only those who found some truth in the positions of their discussion partners but also those—sometimes the same people—who defended a core of Christian orthodoxy while debating representatives of the powerful, compelling religions of modern Asia.

The First Edition

Before delineating the sense of that change in the second edition, we should look at the history of the first edition of Ferguson's *EEC*. Gary Kuras, then of Garland Publishing, surveyed the field of reference works in Christianity and noticed that there was no one-volume encyclopedia for early Christianity.[23] He discussed that lacuna with editors at Garland and began the search for an editor of such a work. As he discussed the matter with specialists in early Christian studies, Ferguson's name appeared. Ferguson accepted the position as editor and built his own team.[24] He and those editors selected authors for the various articles. As one would expect, there were at each level scholars who did not find the project appealing enough to undertake the tasks, but the overall response was encouraging.

The Ferguson encyclopedia's major competitor, Berardino's Italian three-volume encyclopedia, was in its planning stage, emerged, and was beginning its journey into translation before the first edition of the *EEC*

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[22] Frank Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1993–94).

[23] There is now another one-volume work, *The Concise Dictionary of Early Christianity* (ed. Joseph Kelly; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press/Michael Glazier, 1992), one focused specifically on a student audience. It has also appeared in a French edition, *Dictionnaire du christianisme ancien*, trans. Jean Denis Berger (Petits dictionnaires bleus; Paris: Brepols, 1994).

[24] Kuras's observation appeared in the early 1980s. The contract for the encyclopedia itself was issued December 4, 1984.

appeared.[25] It was intended to fill a gap behind the superb multi-volume encyclopedias such as the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*,[26] the English edition of which was published in 1992 by Oxford University Press.[27] Ferguson's encyclopedia appeared in 1991, listed at a price lower than the original Italian work. It was recommended by the American Society of Church History and the North American Patristic Society, became an alternate selection of the History Book Club, and was offered at a discount by other specialty groups. It soon went into a still less expensive paperback edition.[28] As a rule it was well received.[29] When the Oxford translation of Berardino's work appeared, it had more articles, pictures, and maps than Ferguson's encyclopedia. It was at times considered by reviewers as the necessary choice between the two editions,[30] but it proved to be not well priced for the market.

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[25] *Dizionario Patristico e di Antichità*, Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Roma in 3 vols., ed. Angelo Di Berardino (Casale Monferrato, Italia: Casa Editricie Marietti, 1983); *Dictionnaire encyclopédique du christianisme ancien*, 2 vols., ed. Angelo Di Berardino, trans. François Vial (Paris: Édition du Cerf, 1990).

[26] *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, ed. Theodor Klauser, Ernst Dassmann et al., 16 vols. (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1950–).

[27] *Encyclopedia of the Early Church*, ed. Angelo Di Berardino, trans. Adrian Walford, foreword and bibliographic amendments by W.H.C. Frend, 2 vols. (Oxford: James Clark; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[28] As of July 1996 the *EEC* has sold about 6300 hard copies and 1700 paperbacks.

[29] M. Patrick Graham, *American Reference Books Annual* 22 (1991) 584; Robin Jensen, *Andover Newton Review* 2 (1991) 59–60; Edgar Krentz, *BA* 55 (1992) 46–47; *Booklist* 86 (1990) 2202; *Catholic Library World* 63 (1992) 148; Robert B. Eno, *Catholic Historical Review* 76 (1990) 819–20; D. Bourquin, *Choice* 28 (1990) 78; Henry Chadwick, *CH* 62 (1993) 243–44; Gary Ferngren, *Crux* 27 (1991) 47–48; Paul Rorem, *CurTM* 18 (1991) 372; Edwin M. Yamauchi, *Fides et Historia* 23 (1991) 80–87; James Edward McGoldrick, *GTJ* 11 (1990) 256–57; Howard Clark Kee, *JChS* 35 (1993) 425–26; Gerald Bonner, *JEH* 42 (1991) 333; James Edward McGoldrick, *JETS* 36 (1993) 107–8; C. Robert Nixon, *Library Journal* 115 (1990) 82; W. B. Knickerbocker Jr., *Memphis Theological Seminary Journal* 29 (1991) 73–74; Agnes Cunningham, *Mid-Stream* 30 (1991) 290–92; Henry O. Thompson, *PBR* 9 (1990) 206–7; *Reference Book Review* 11 (1991) 30; *Reference & Research Book News* 5 (1990) 2; Michel Barnes, *Religious Studies and Theology* 11 (1991) 99–100; Abraham Malherbe, *ResQ* 33 (1991) 106–8; Glenn B. Hinson, *RevExp* 88 (1991) 464–65; Thomas F. O'Connor, *RQ* 30 (1990) 290; Donald Armentrout, *Sewanee Theological Review* 35 (1992) 311, 314; James L. Schaaf, *Trinity Seminary Review* 13 (1991) 45–46. The reviews by Jensen, Krentz, Eno, Chadwick, Yamauchi, Bonner, Malherbe, and Barnes helped shape the 2d edition through their constructive critical comments.

[30] Reviews of *The Encyclopedia of the Early Church* on occasion compared the two works. Robert Grant, *CH* 61 (1992) 393–94, thought that the Walford translation of Berardino was more comprehensive, as did Gary B. Ferngren, *Fides et Historia* 26 (1994) 62–63. Paul Rorem, *CurMTh* 20 (1993) 305–6, preferred the Ferguson work

The first edition of the *EEC* is interestingly different from the Italian work and its English Oxford translation and updating. Yet along with them it fits a particular pattern that one could find not only in the fierce sixteenth-century debates between the editors of the Magdeburg *Historia Ecclesiae Christi* and Caesar Baronius's *Annales Ecclesiastici*, but also in church histories produced by Christians which cover the early period, those from Eusebius to the present. Such works, not compact encyclopedias, but often narrative histories organized around chronology, concentrate primarily upon texts, inscriptions, and material remains that come from Greek and Latin culture of the Mediterranean. There is usually a sprinkling of comments about things farther east and south. Reader expectation in Europe and North America has demanded treatment of Christianity's movement west into language/culture groups such as Celtic and Gothic, but the growth of Christian communities east of Antioch and south of Alexandria usually have received spotty coverage.[31] Only occasionally have substantial dictionaries or encyclopedias focused on sources for Christianity in other language or cultural groups within the Mediterranean region.[32]

Although during the last quarter of this century it has become common for doctoral programs in early Christian history to encourage and then almost to demand that Syriac and/or Coptic be included as

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primarily because of better production by Garland than the Hong Kong James Clark edition of Walford's translation of Berardino.

[31] In a conversation Samuel Hugh Moffett, author of *Christianity in Asia*, vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1500* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), told me that he undertook the project because of the lack of other up-to-date histories. Having served as a missionary in Korea for decades, he began teaching a survey course under that title. His Korean students, trained in church history at the Ph.D. level particularly in North America, preferred to teach standard Western church history. The lack of interest in their own Asian backgrounds within major centers offering doctoral studies and the wide linguistic mastery, which Moffett does not claim, proved too daunting for a number of his best protégés.

That is one reason the project of the Church History Association of India is such a sparkling success. It is written by Indians who have both deep interest in and some control of the language/culture groupings. A. Mathias Mundadan, *History of Christian India*, vol. 1, *From the Beginning up to the Middle of the Sixteenth Century* (Bangalore, India: Church History Association of India, 1984; repr. 1989) deals with the early period.

[32] For example, see Aziz S. Atiya et al., *The Coptic Encyclopedia* (8 vols.; New York: Macmillan, 1991), which is devoted not only to the early materials but to the entire culture.

language/culture sources, only late twentieth-century encyclopedias regularly include them as part of their entries.

Some specialists have studied Armenian, Ethiopic, and Georgian to learn of those Christian communities, but not often because translations in those languages contained the only extant exemplars of Greek works. Old Slavonic has interested historians of liturgy but is also learned because of its translations of otherwise lost Greek volumes. Others have mastered Arabic in order to investigate the considerable number of its Christian texts as well as translations.[33] The study of languages such as Chinese and Sanskrit or Pali, in which early Christian sources or references are rare, have too seldom interested patristic scholars. A number of Asian languages, particularly those along the Old Silk Road and the sea-trading lanes, contain comments that speak of the introduction of Christianity into their cultures.

In English the remarkable *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, whose four volumes are still a mine of information, suffers both from the number of discoveries made after its publication and its lack of thorough concentration on Eastern Christians.[34] Even *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, justly honored by many including me as the best single volume of its kind, as late as its second edition in 1974, includes articles on China and India, and some examples of Eastern Christian literature for the early period, but it does not treat some of those writers most helpful in dealing with Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, or Taoism. It is noted for its weighty treatment of what it considers to be foundational Greek and Latin figures.[35]

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[33] There are ancient versions of selected orations by Gregory of Nazianzus in Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Georgian, Slavonic, and Syriac. Irenaeus's *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching* is extant only in Armenian. *The Treatise on Free Will, On the Resurrection*, and *On Life and Reasonable Actions* of Methodius come down to us in complete form only within Slavonic translations. Hippolytus's entire *Commentary on Daniel* exists only in Slavonic; his *Commentary on the Canticle of Canticles* is preserved in its entirety only in Georgian. His *Apostolic Tradition* is fully extant in Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Latin translations.

[34] *A Dictionary of Christian Biography, Literature, Sects and Doctrine*, ed. William Smith and Henry Wace (4 vols.; London: J. Murray, 1877–87; repr. New York: AMS Press, 1974).

[35] *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (2d ed.; ed. F.L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone; London: Oxford University Press, 1974). Timothy I, Theodore Abū Qurrah, and the Dunhuang documents are either not treated or not emphasized.

The Second Edition

The new edition of the *EEC* includes a series of changes. Marked by nearly twice the number of pictures and maps, it is approximately 25 percent larger because of both the rewriting of some articles and the extension of their bibliographies, but primarily because of the appearance of many new topics. Its wider focus depends on Christian sources in a plethora of languages. The burgeoning interest in religious pluralism which affects all contemporary studies of Christianity guides its pages. One initial impression in comparing the two editions is provided by the endpaper maps. In the first edition, the same map of the Mediterranean region was used for both sets of endpapers. In the second, the original map is included, but a second one designates Constantinople and Antioch as its western edge, sweeps south to include Ethiopia and then east all the way to Japan. Coverage inside the volume includes articles on Christian figures who lived and worked in Persia, interest-whetting articles on eastern and central Asia, India, and China as well as articles on individual figures from those regions. Thus the language and cultural coverage of the field as conceived by the editors has expanded well out into Asia and Africa and thus has reflected the changing geographical boundaries of the field.

The decisions behind these changes also include a sense that the older confinement of early Christian studies to the first six centuries is not itself the best periodization. Christians reached China, Korea, and Japan in the late sixth through the eighth centuries. By moving the imaginary chronological barrier up toward the end of the ninth century, not only are the seven ecumenical councils of Eastern Orthodoxy included but also Christian Arabic events and literature.[36] Some articles on Eastern Christian authors go well up into the Middle Ages because their works contain information about earlier writings or events. 'Abdīsō [Ebedjesu] bar Brīkā (d. 1318) an important East Syrian (Nestorian) figure, wrote "an extensive bibliography of Syriac literature." Bar Hebraeus (Grīgōr bar 'Ebrāyā, in Arabic Grīgōr abu l'Farağ ibn al'Ibri), 1225/6–1286, a significant West Syrian (Jacobite) figure, wrote an extremely large *Scholia on the Old Testament (Genesis–II Samuel)*, which contains many

[36] The *Encyclopedia of the Early Church* employs Bede (673–735) in the West and John of Damascus (ca. 675–ca. 759) in the East as its outside dates.

comments of earlier West Syrian exegetes known to us only from his efforts.[37]

If this expanded periodization is adopted throughout the discipline, the study of early Christianity will never be quite the same. All periods in history are remarkably artificial and formed only for specific reasons. This revised effort seems appropriate because it is a proper response to Christian concerns with religious pluralism at the end of the twentieth century. An early Christian theological "canon" composed of primarily Latin and Greek writers with some attention to Syriac and/or Coptic Christianity has a tendency to leave early Christian resources only loosely tied to some pressing contemporary Christian questions. The expansion east into the ninth century, however, provides access to Christians responding to Islam in the Middle East. It also introduces the reader, particularly in Xi'an stele and the remarkable Dunhuang documents discovered within a Buddhist library in western China near the turn of the twentieth century,[38] to Christian reflections on certain aspects of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism in China as well as indicating that sources for early contact with Hinduism in India are difficult to obtain.[39]

The enlargement of what is covered by "early Christianity" not only opens up interesting avenues previously entered only by specialists; it

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[37] Both articles in the second edition are by David Bundy.

[38] P. Yoshirō Saeki, *The Nestorian Documents and Relics in China* (2d ed.; Tokyo: Maruzen, 1951); Lo Hsiang Lin, *Nestorianism in the T'ang and Yuan Dynasties* [in Chinese] (Hong Kong: University Press, 1966); Paul Pelliot, *Recherches sur les Chrétiens d'Asie Centrale et d'Extrême-Orient, II.1 La Stèle de Si-ngan-fou* (Œuvres posthumes de P. Pelliot, ed. J. Dauvillier; Paris: Éditions de la Foundation Singer-Polignac, 1984); David Bundy, "Missiological Reflections on Nestorian Christianity in China during the Tang Dynasty," *Religion in the Pacific Area* (ed. F. Flinn and T. Hedricks; New York: Paragon, 1985) 14–30. Li Tang, a Chinese national who studied in England, the United States, and France, is completing at the University of Tübingen a Th.D. dissertation which deals with these sources.

[39] A. Mingana, "The Early Spread of Christianity in India," *BJRL* 10 (1926) 435–510; repr. *Studies in Early Christianity*, ed. Everett Ferguson, vol. 12, *Missions and Regional Characteristics of the Early Church* (New York: Garland, 1993) 289–364; S. G. Pothan, *Syrian Christians of Kerala* (4th ed.; Madras: Cherian, 1968); A. M. Mundadan, *Sixteenth-Century Traditions of St. Thomas Christians* (Bangalore: Dharmaram College, 1970); G. Schurhammer, "New Light about the Tomb of Mailapur," *The Malabar Church* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1970) 99–102; S. Neill, *A History of Christianity in India: The Beginnings to* AD *1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); A. M. Mundadan, *History of Christianity in India*, vol. 1; M. Quéré, "Christianity in Sri Lanka before the Coming of the Portuguese," *Aquinas Journal* (Sri Lanka) 4 (1987)127–53.

also presents ways in which translations and studies may be suggested to such scholars for general readers interested in the topic. Timothy I, East Syrian (Nestorian) patriarch of Baghdad in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, wrote a piece that details his intense conversations with the Caliph Mahdi about Christianity and Islam. Translated into English nearly seventy years ago, it can be used to give students some sense of how one early Christian responded to repeated Islamic questioning about Trinity and Christology. Furthermore, it offers praise of Mohammed as a prophet who taught important truths, praise that is clear, thankful, and yet limited. As tantalizing as Timothy's treatise is, specialists in Syriac and Arabic Christian literature almost without fail notice that Timothy's reflection on his ordeal in the caliph's palace is itself not necessarily the best of the many pieces in this genre.[40] Theodore Abū Qurrah, bishop of Harran, was probably a Syriac-speaking author who knew some Greek but wrote in Arabic. He also is a remarkable source for the interaction between Christians and Muslims in the eighth and ninth centuries.[41] Yet neither Timothy's remembrance nor the work of Theodore Abū Qurrah exhausts the interesting discussions which took place between Muslims and Christians during that early period.[42]

There is need to translate other literature of this type into modern languages so that the history of Christian engagement with Islam can be learned by those who are unlikely to become masters of the Arabic language. Indeed, such translations might be one way to encourage more

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[40] *The Apology of Timothy the Patriarch before the Caliph Mahdi*, Syriac text and English translation (ed. and trans. A. Mingana, *BJRL* 12/1 (1928f.) 137–298; repr. Woodbrooke Studies 2 (Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1928) 1–162. H. Putnam offers an Arabic text with a French translation, *L'Eglise et l'Islam sous Timothée I* (780–823) (Beirut: Dar el Machreq, 1975) 169–327.

[41] See Sidney Griffith, "Theodore Abū Qurrah: The Intellectual Profile of an Arab Christian Writer of the First Abbasid Century," Irene Halmos Chair of Arabic Literature Annual Lecture 1992 (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1992); idem, "Reflections on the Biography of Theodore Abū Qurrah," *Parole de l'Orient* 18 (1993) 143–70.

[42] John Lamoreaux, "Early Eastern Christian Responses to Islam," *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam: A Book of Essays* (GMC 10; ed. John Victor Tolan; New York: Garland, 1996) 3–31, offers a concise overview. Sydney Griffith's forthcoming "The Monk in the Emir's *Majlis*: Reflections on a Popular Genre of Christian Literary Apologetics in Arabic in the Early Islamic Period" looks at the whole genre for Arab Christians. He also deals with specific cases in "The Arabic Account of 'Abd Al-Masīh an-Naǧrānī al-Ghassānī," *Le Muséon* 98 (1985) 331–74, and "Muhammad and the Monk Bahîrâ: Reflections on a Syriac and Arabic Text from Early Abbasid Times," *OC* 79 (1995) 146–74.

students of the early church to study Arabic. This second edition of the *EEC* adds impetus to that prospect.

Revisiting encyclopedia, investigating the shape which the *EEC* has taken in its second edition, shows again that the encirclement of knowledge, the sense of a well-rounded education, changes in terms of the context in which those creating any encyclopedia find themselves. Looking again at the concept of encyclopedia shows that the genre has always responded to cultural concerns. Christians in the present era need resources that reflect their engagement not only with Greco-Roman religions of which it was a part, but also with resources that tell of its expansion east into the areas of the great religions which are dominant interests in the modern or postmodern period. Global concerns in Western education have demanded a more global encyclopedia of early Christianity.

The tribute for this shift in the second edition must go to Ferguson. As the last assistant to Arthur Darby Nock at Harvard, he was schooled in Hellenistic texts and backgrounds to Scripture and the fathers as well as biblical and patristic texts themselves. He has continued that heritage and has enlarged his own interests to include early Christian art, architecture, and artifacts. In spite of what at times has become the limiting factor of such Western classical education, Ferguson has never been a curmudgeon. He has watched the study of early Christianity move into deeper looks at Coptic literature because of the Nag Hammadi discoveries and Syriac if only initially to spell out the positions of the so-called Antiochene School, whose main works are often extant only in Syriac translations. But he had no difficulty grasping the importance of shifting the widest focus of the *EEC*'s second edition both south and east to include this contemporary perspective.

The vision is sound, but there will doubtless be more criticisms because of situations overlooked, names and positions not represented, articles not extended into the eighth and ninth centuries, other aspects of the newer paradigm that are not reflected in every entry. But that discussion in itself will enlarge the field and bring what were the plaintive cries of isolated specialists into the central discussions within the fields of theological education and religious studies, a place where they definitely belong.

FOURTH- AND FIFTH-CENTURY HOMILISTS ON THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

Hendrik F. Stander

Fig. 1: The Ascension, from the Rabbula Gospels (sixth century). Laurentian Library, Florence. Published in D. T. Rice, *Art of the Byzantine Era* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1989) 36. Photo used with the kind permission of Thames and Hudson.

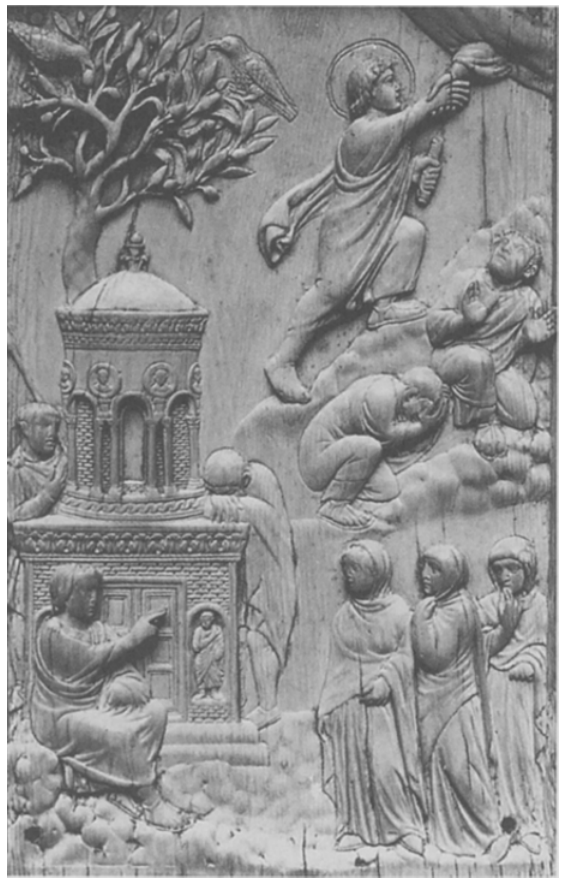

Fig. 2: An ivory panel of the Ascension (early fifth century). North Italian, now at the National Museum, Munich. Published in R. Milburn, *Early Christian Art and Architecture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988) 237. Photo used with the kind permission of the University of California Press.

A. *Introduction*

Not very many explicit references to the ascension of Christ occur in the ante-Nicene writings. Nevertheless, the belief in the ascension was

assumed by all the early theologians.[1] The reason the early theologians never expounded the ascension in detail was that the doctrine itself was widely accepted in the ante-Nicene church. Moreover, it did not touch upon any other controversial issue. Only in the last quarter of the fourth century in the vicinity of Antioch was a separate feast day first set aside for the celebration of the ascension of Christ.[2] It then became one of the twelve Great Feasts.[3] Thus on at least one day in the year, the homilists had to pay particular attention to the theological meaning of this day. This explains why we have so many sermons from the fourth and fifth centuries on the ascension of Christ.

These extant sermons expose the ancient homilists' deep theological reflections on the ascension. Unfortunately, this doctrinal issue is often neglected in modern studies on the early church.[4] This article is, therefore, a modest attempt to scrutinize various sermons on the ascension in order to determine the prevailing theological ideas of the fourth and fifth centuries on this issue.

On a more personal level: Amidst Professor Ferguson's numerous writings of varied nature, there are several thematic studies in which he has disclosed to us one or another aspect of early Christian life or belief. These valuable works were the inspiration of this attempt of mine to

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[1] Cf. N. R. Gulley, "Ascension of Christ," *ABD* 1.473.

[2] J. G. Davies (*He Ascended into Heaven. A Study in the History of Doctrine* [London: Lutterworth, 1958] 113, 192–98) does not agree that Ascension Day was not observed until the latter part of the fourth century. He argues that in all probability it was already in existence at least from the first decades of the fourth century. Cf. also J. Daniélou, "Grégoire de Nysse et l'Origine de la Fête de l'Ascension," *Kyriakon. Festschrift Johannes Quasten* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973) 663–66.

[3] Cf. R. F. Taft and A. W. Carr, "Ascension," *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (ed. A. P. Kazhdan; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 1.203. There were nine fixed feasts (Annunciation, Nativity, Epiphany, Hypapante, Transfiguration, Birth of the Virgin, the Presentation of the Virgin, the Dormition, the Exaltation of the Cross) and three mobile feasts (Palm Sunday, Ascension, and Easter). Ps.-Chrysostom says that, according to the number of the days of the creation, God has given six feast days, namely, Nativity, Epiphany, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and the Descent of the Spirit. The seventh day of the week represents the seventh feast day, which we are still awaiting, namely the day when we will all be resurrected again.

[4] The scanty bibliography of V. Saxer's short entry on "Ascension" (*The Encyclopedia of the Early Church* [ed. A. Di Berardino; Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1992] 83) provides enough proof of the extent to which this important Christian dogma is being overlooked by modern scholars of the early Christian church. Saxer should have included in this bibliography the work of Davies, *He Ascended into Heaven*, and perhaps also the much older work of Dewald, "The Iconography of the Ascension" (*AJA* 19 [1915] 277–319).

study another aspect of early Christian theology which perhaps has not received enough attention. Furthermore, I know that Professor Ferguson has a special interest in the works of Gregory of Nyssa, the author of a homily which can probably be regarded as (one of) the earliest Ascension Day sermon(s). Thus this present study can perhaps provide a wider context against which Gregory of Nyssa's homily can be understood.

In this study of the fourth- and fifth-century homilies on the ascension of Christ, I have attempted to select sermons which can indeed be regarded as representative of the wider church, both orthodox and heretical. Consequently, all the sermons from this period which are listed in the Patrologiae Graecae Indices are included.[5] Important Latin sermons have also been added to this list, as well as two sermons which are probably of Nestorian origin. Thus thirteen sermons of twelve theologians have been selected. The date and region in which each of these ancient theologians exercised power are also indicated to give the reader an idea of how widespread (or almost universal) these views on the ascension of Christ were in the fourth and fifth centuries.[6] The theologians are as follows:

(1) John Chrysostom (347–407) was a presbyter at Antioch and bishop of Constantinople and lived during the golden age of early Christian literature. Only one of the numerous homilies on the ascension of Christ which have been preserved under his name can be regarded as genuine.[7] (2) One of the more significant of Ps.-Chrysostom's homilies will also be included, though we do not have any information on the date and provenance thereof.[8] (3) To the east of Constantinople (where Chrysostom lived) we encounter Nilus of Ancyra (d. 430), who was an abbot of a monastery in Asia Minor and a disciple of John Chrysostom.[9] (4) East of Ancyra is Nyssa (but its site is not definitely identified). Gregory of Nyssa (335–95), the youngest of the three great Cappadocians, was appointed in 371 to the see of Nyssa in Cappadocia.[10]

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[5] However, only one of the numerous homilies which were falsely preserved under the name of Chrysostom has been included. The other Ps.-Chrysostom homilies contain no "new" information; therefore, their inclusion is not warranted.

[6] The texts on which this study is based will be given when the names of the homilists occur for the first time. Since these texts form the basis of this present study, it will serve no purpose to repeat the references each time they occur. However, references to all other works will be given in full.

[7] For the text, see PG 50.441–52.

[8] For the text, see PG 52.799–802.

[9] For the text of his homily, see PG 79.1497–502.

[10] For the text of his homily, see PG 46.689–94, or E. Gebhardt, *Gregorii Nysseni*

(5) It is uncertain who is the author of the festal sermons which have been preserved under the name of Epiphanius.[11] We do know that Epiphanius (315–403) was a native of Palestine and became bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, which is to the south of Nyssa. Though we can be certain that Epiphanius was not the author of these homilies, the contents thereof suggest that the author must have been a contemporary of Epiphanius and probably lived in the same region. (6) To the west of Cyprus (but still in the East), we read the homily of Diadochus (400–474),[12] bishop of Photice in Epirus Vetus.

(7) When we move over to the West, we encounter the homily of Chromatius (d. 407), bishop of Aquileia in northeastern Italy.[13] (8) South of Aquileia, in Africa, was the greatest of the Latin Fathers in the West, Augustine (354–430), bishop of Hippo in the Roman province of Numidia in North Africa.[14] (9) East of Numidia, also in North Africa, we encounter Eusebius of Alexandria in the late fifth century (or early sixth century).[15] (10) The homily on the ascension under the name of Athanasius of Alexandria (300–373) is probably spurious. Nevertheless, the content of this homily is much in line with the theology of Athanasius, who was a most dynamic leader of Egyptian Christianity in the fourth century. He was also the greatest of the fourth-century defenders of the First Council of Nicea.[16]

(11) All the writings above represent orthodox theology from the fourth and fifth centuries. Unfortunately, writings of heretics were usually destroyed; therefore, it can be quite difficult to find homilies of heretics. Sometimes, however, their writings were preserved under the name of important orthodox theologians. Baur[17] ascribes two of the

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Opera (Sermones, Pars 1; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967) 9.323–27. The latter text has been used in this article.

[11] We will therefore refer to the author as Ps.-Epiphanius. For the text of his homily, see PG 43.477–86.

[12] For the text, see PG 65.1141–48, or SC 5.164–68.

[13] For the text, see SC 154, pp. 182–95 (*Sermo* viii).

[14] For the text of his homily on the ascension (*Sermo* CCLXV), see PL 38.1218–24.

[15] The homily which is included in this study has been preserved under the name of Chrysostom, but Migne suggests that perhaps the true author is Eusebius of Alexandria. The text is found in PG 64.45–48.

[16] For the text, see PG 28.1091–1100. Davies (*He Ascended into Heaven,* 132) thinks that this homily should be attributed to Basil of Caesarea (ca. 330–79).

[17] F. C. Baur, "Drei unedierte Festpredigten aus der Zeit der nestorianischen Streitigkeiten," *Traditio* 9 (1953) 101–26. Cf. also H. F. Stander, "A Homily of Nestorius on the Ascension of Christ: Text, Translation and a Commentary," *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 6 (1995) 130–46, and H. F. Stander, "Another Nestorian Homily on the

ascension homilies which were preserved under the name of Chrysostom to Nestorian theologians (these homilies will be referred to respectively as Nestorius-1[18] and Nestorius-2[19]). Baur even thinks that Nestorius himself could perhaps be the author of one of these homilies. Nestorius (382–451), a monk of Persian descent, was a priest at Antioch. Consecrated bishop of Constantinople in 428, he was deposed and exiled for propagating Dyophysite theology. It should also be said that Nestorius did not really deserve the heretical label. (12) While we are back in Constantinople, we will also look at the homily of Proclus of Constantinople (d. 446), one of the earliest opponents of bishop Nestorius.[20]

B. *The Importance of Ascension Day*

Forty days after his resurrection from the dead, Christ ascended to heaven. Both Augustine and Ps.-Athanasius argue that this period of time was necessary to prove that Christ's resurrection was a reality. Nobody would have believed that the raising of Christ was genuine if he had had only one day to show himself to them and if he had been thereafter taken away from the people.

Nevertheless, initially ordinary Christians did not have much regard for Ascension Day. Ps.-Epiphanius says that "many people are ignorant about the greatness of this day and regard it as of less importance." Therefore, the ancient theologians did their best to emphasize the importance of Ascension Day. Nestorius-1 refers to the Ascension as "the very crown of all feasts," while Ps.-Epiphanius says that "just as the head is placed on the body as the splendour of the body, the feast of Ascension is the splendour of the feasts."

Ps.-Epiphanius also explains why the Ascension should be regarded as the culmination of all the festivals of the church: The first feast of the birth of Christ (= Nativity) was exceeded by the second feast of Theophany (or the Day of Manifestation) since the former was accompanied by only a star which indicated that God was born. However, at the second

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Ascension of Christ: Text, Translation, and a Commentary," *Acta Patristica et Byzantina* 7 (1996) 105–16.

[18] For the text, see F. C. Baur, "Drei unedierte Festpredigten," *Traditio* 9 (1953) 116–19.

[19] For the text, see F. C. Baur, "Drei unedierte Festpredigten," *Traditio* 9 (1953) 122–24.

[20] For the text of his homily, see PG 65.833–38.

event (= baptism) God himself called from heaven to confirm that Christ was his beloved Son. Nevertheless, the shortcoming was that the body had not yet received immortality. That happened at Resurrection Day. Christ triumphed over death, but there was nevertheless another discordant sound: Christ was still confined to the earth. Finally, however, on Ascension Day Christ successfully achieved his goal. His ascent into heaven was the final leg of his mission, and it also sealed his victory.

Ps.-Epiphanius also argued that Satan realized that he was outwitted when Christ was raised from death. Satan therefore planned a second cross for Jesus. However, when Christ ascended into heaven (the very place from where Satan himself had been thrown out), Satan had to concede that he was defeated. The ascension of Christ was therefore of great significance.

Chromatius too calls upon his audience to celebrate the solemnity of Ascension Day. He attributes the importance of the day to the fact that Jesus showed his true love for our human nature when he was even willing to ascend to the Father in bodily form.

In the only extant sermon of Chrysostom on the ascension, he too stressed the importance of the celebration of this day. As a matter of fact, he held the day in such great esteem that he felt obliged to go out of the city and deliver his sermon in the martyrium of Romanesia, in the vicinity of Antioch, so that the deceased could participate in the celebration of the day. Chrysostom said that the angels and the deceased added luster to the day with their presence. Chrysostom had no doubt that the angels too attended the celebration since they are everywhere. If they are in the sky,[21] they are all the more in the church, and if they are in the church, they are all the more present when Christ's ascension is celebrated.

C. *The Ascension of Elijah versus the Ascension of Christ*

Many ancient theologians tried to reconcile the statement in the Gospel of John (3:13) that "no one has ever gone up to heaven except the Son of Man" with the OT record of Elijah's ascension. Moreover, Ps.-Epiphanius says that the Jews were keen to play down the ascension of Christ by pointing out that Elijah too ascended to heaven. Consequently,

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[21] Chrysostom appeals to the following Scriptures to prove his point: 1 Cor 11:10; Gen 48:16; Acts 12:15, and Gen 32:2.

church fathers often compared the ascension of Christ with the ascension of Elijah. They frequently argued that Jesus' ascent surpassed the assumption of Elijah (and also the ethereal journey of Enoch).[22] Nilus writes that Enoch and Elijah nevertheless foreshadowed our own immortality. But Ps.-Epiphanius accuses the Jews of blindness and of mutilating the Scriptures because they do not carefully study the Greek text of 2 (4) Kgs 2:11, where the ascension of Elijah is described. The LXX reads as follows: καὶ ἀνελήφθη Ἠλιοὺ ἐν συσσεισμῷ ὡς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν ("and Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind as it were into heaven"). Nestorius-1, Ps.-Epiphanius, Proclus, and Ps.-Athanasius point out that Elijah went ὡς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν ("as it were into" *heaven*), while Jesus went εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν ("into" heaven). Elijah therefore did not truly ascend to heaven.

But the ascension of Christ was also in other respects superior to the ascension of Elijah. Chrysostom says that God sent a chariot of fire to fetch Elijah since the latter was merely a servant. However, Jesus ascended in a cloud, as it befits the Son of God. Furthermore, Elijah left behind a cloak for Elisha, while Christ left behind the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Elijah's power was transferred to Elisha, and the latter became a prophet; but when Christ departed, he empowered numerous people who became prophets and who were much more glorious than Elisha. Elijah's ascent caused distress to Elisha, but when Christ ascended, two angels consoled the disciples with a promise that Christ would come again to fetch them. Nevertheless, Ps.-Epiphanius believes that the ascension of Elijah and of Enoch gladdened the hearts of the people and served as a sign of the hope of that which they would see when Jesus ascended to heaven.

D. *The Transfiguration and the Ascension of Christ*

The early theologians also compared Christ's transfiguration (Matt 17:1–13) with his ascension. Ps.-Chrysostom says that the latter was much more formidable than the former: When Christ was transfigured, a cloud overshadowed him, but now a cloud took him up into the heavens. Then Moses and Elijah appeared, but now the cherubic throne (i.e., the invisible power) standing upon the cloud snatched away the

[22] Cf. Gen. 5:24. Cf. also *Romanos Hymnus* 48.14 (SC).

Lord. Then Peter asked the Lord if they could make three tents for them, but now the disciples were confounded and could not utter a word.

E. *Christ's Descent to the Underworld and His Ascent to Heaven*

Christ's ascent to heaven was often linked with his descent to the underworld. These two excursions complement each other as the opposite spheres where his dominion has been established. Perhaps this is also the underlying idea of Eph 4:9–10 ("What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe").

The ancient theologians were eager to point out various similarities between these two "trips" of Jesus. Nestorius-1 says, for example, that the Lord claimed victory in both Hades and heaven while he was clad in our human nature. He also says that the gatekeepers of death shouted when they saw the strange descent of Christ, who visited them in a miraculous way. Similarly, the celestial powers uttered the same words of amazement at the strange sight of the one who ascended in bodily form. Gregory of Nyssa points out that the celestial beings called out that the gates should be lifted up both when Christ descended from heaven to earth and again when he ascended from earth to heaven.

F. *The Ascension and Ancient Cosmology*

The ancients' views of the ascension were interlaced with their cosmological views. It is clear from their homilies that they regarded heaven as a specific geographical area which was located above the celestial space. They also generally believed that there were various strata or layers of heaven. Perhaps this is also the underlying idea of Heb 4:14 ("Therefore, since we have a great high priest *who has gone through the heavens*, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess").[23] In Jewish writings the number of heavens was most commonly considered to be seven, but other numbers, including three,

[23] Cf. also Eph 4:10.

were also mentioned.[24] Paul thought that Paradise was in the third heaven (2 Cor 12:2).

As a matter of fact, not only the heavens but the whole universe consisted of different strata. Scores of celestial beings are to be found in these different layers. Chrysostom reminds his audience that there are, for example, many demons and angels in the air. However, one should bear in mind that the different kinds of celestial beings are not in a state of disorder. Rather, they are to be found in a specific hierarchical structure. Chrysostom gives us a clear picture of the ancients' world view of the different layers, and the powers and the host of angels inhabiting these layers, when he describes the whole route which Christ had to traverse when he ascended: "But he went beyond the angels, he passed the archangels, he went beyond the cherubim, he went up higher than the seraphim, he passed the powers, he did not stop, till he reached the throne of the Lord. Do you not see this space from the heaven to the earth? Or let us rather begin from below. Do you not see how far is the distance from Hades up to the earth? And again from the earth up to the heaven? And again from the heaven up to the higher heaven? From there to the angels, to the archangels, to the powers above, to the royal throne itself? He carried up our nature for this whole distance and height."

Nestorius-1 says that unlike Elijah, Christ flew over all these heavenly arches and entered heaven. Thus Jesus went much further than Elijah. Proclus says that all the angelic orders in the different strata praised Christ as he passed them on his way to the Father in the highest heaven. As in the case of the disciples on the earth, these incorporeal celestial beings stared at the heavens when Jesus ascended to heaven past them in bodily form.

G. *Graphic Descriptions of Christ's Ethereal Journey*

Christ's ascension is an important element of Christian belief, but it is described explicitly in the NT only twice (John 1:50–53 and Acts 1:9–11).[25] In the fourth and fifth centuries, however, this event stirred the imagination of the theologians, and they gave graphic descriptions of, first, what happened on the Mount of Olives when Jesus ascended to

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[24] Cf. R. L. Omanson and J. Ellington, *Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians* (UBS Handbook Series; New York: United Bible Societies, 1993) 218.

[25] There is, of course, also the later addition to the conclusion of Mark (16:19).

his Father. Second, they also gave fanciful detail on Christ's ethereal journey itself, and, third, on what happened at his arrival in heaven. Let us now look at each of these three scenes and how the early theologians embroidered the biblical account.

1. *The Events on the Mount of Olives*

Nestorius-2 writes that only the twelve disciples were present when Jesus ascended to heaven. He draws the attention of his audience to the principle in Deut 19:15 that "a matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." Thus we have four times more witnesses of the ascension than the required number. Therefore, we have to believe the disciples' testimony about the ascension. Eusebius of Alexandria, however, writes that when Jesus took his disciples to the Mount of Olives, many other people also gathered there. Chrysostom emphasizes that there were also many angels present and they rejoiced when they saw that Christ was about to ascend. He then applies John 1:51 ("You shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man") to the ascension. We are told in Mark 16:19 that Jesus spoke to his disciples before he was taken up to heaven, and in Acts 1:7–8 we read that Jesus promised to send them the Holy Spirit. Typical of some modern preachers, these ancient homilists embellished the narrative to make it more interesting and "lively" and, therefore, gave detailed accounts of the conversation between Jesus and his disciples.

Eusebius of Alexandria, for instance, strings together various scriptural quotations[26] and makes them part of the message of the Lord to his disciples. He says that Jesus commanded his disciples to proclaim his message to the whole world. Jesus also reminded them of everything which he suffered during the Holy Week, and he even informed them of what happened behind the scenes: Angels came down to assist Jesus and said, "Let us break through their bonds, and cast away their yoke from us" (Ps 2:3). Jesus, however, did not allow them to do this.

In this speech on the Mount of Olives, according to Eusebius of Alexandria, Jesus also rails against the Jews for not accepting the Messiah despite all the blessings which they have received from the hand of God, and he promises that the temple will be replaced by his

[26] The quotations are John 20:21; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15; Matt 10:8; Luke 6:28; and John 13:35.

church. When Jesus was crucified, he asked the disciple John to take care of his mother. Now, at the ascension, he again entrusted his mother Mary to this disciple and repeated the same words. Augustine points out that someone's last words at his deathbed always carry much weight. This is also how Jesus' words at his ascension should be regarded. And his last words consisted, first, of a promise to send us the Holy Spirit and, second, of an exhortation to go out and be his witnesses all over the world.

Eusebius of Alexandria says a bright cloud overshadowed the hill, and scores of prophets gathered there. In the midst of the prophets was David with his spiritual lyre, and he urged Jesus to ascend to heaven. David then quotes some of the Psalms which were regarded as prophecies about the ascension.

Chromatius makes it very clear that Christ did not need the help of a cloud to ascend to heaven. As a matter of fact, Christ was the maker of the clouds. But the cloud was merely at his service. Chrysostom says that this cloud served as a royal throne for Jesus. It was indeed extraordinary to have a cloud as a throne, but Isaiah tells us that God too rides on a swift cloud (Isa 19:1). Both Chromatius and Chrysostom say that the apostles were not amazed because of the ascension itself, but rather because Jesus ascended in bodily form. But Augustine says that we should not be surprised at his *ascent.* We should rather wonder at his *death* and his *descent to Hades* since the latter two events (and not the ascension) are contrary to his nature.

We read in Acts 1 that after Jesus had ascended to heaven, *two men* dressed in *white* suddenly stood beside the apostles and gave them a message of encouragement. Ps.-Epiphanius says that there were *two* men so that the truth of the event could be believed; they were *men* (ἄνδρες) in order to urge the apostles on to manliness (ἀνδρία); they were dressed in *white* because they enlightened the minds of the bystanders. Ps.-Chrysostom says the *white* apparel was an indication of a great festival.

Chrysostom explains why God deemed it necessary to send these two angels. In the first place he did not want his followers to be sorrowful when Jesus departed, as in the case of Elisha with his master's ascent. These two angels could, at least, comfort the disciples by promising to them that Jesus would come again. Second, these angels could explain to the people what was happening in front of their eyes. Because of the limitations of the disciples' eyes, they would not be able to realize the extent of the miracle which was taking place before their own eyes.

They would not be able, for example, to follow Jesus with their eyes as he was traveling through all the heavens. It was therefore the task of these angels to inform the disciples that, unlike Elijah who went up in the direction of the heaven, Jesus indeed ascended into heaven itself.

2. *Christ's Ethereal Journey*

It is interesting to read the imaginative descriptions of Christ's heavenly journey. Proclus writes that Jesus traversed the heaven as though it were air. According to Chrysostom, Jesus ascended like a bird flying into the sky. But Proclus says that Jesus ascended slowly and little by little (κατὰ μικρόν). Ps.-Epiphanius, on the contrary, describes Jesus as speeding towards heaven; he even dramatically compares it with the speed of chariot drivers when he says:

> Where are those who frequent chariot races, and those who love the speed of the chariot drivers? Come, look at this remarkable chariot race; the Demiurge of the creation is riding upon a human chariot; he is not driving on the earth in a disorderly manner, but he is ascending in a new way to ethereal courses, and he is driving forward to reach the heavenly turning-point, and he runs alongside Beliar[27] and powerfully overturns him.

Ps.-Athanasius, Proclus, and Chromatius say that numerous angelic orders accompanied Jesus. Some of the angels went ahead of Jesus to announce at the heavenly gates that the King of all is on his way. Other angels, filled with awe,[28] escorted him on either side. Some other angels followed him while they were dancing and singing, and others glorified him with hymns. Chromatius argues that since a king is welcomed with praises after his victory, it is fitting that Jesus too should be welcomed by the angels since he had defeated Satan. Modern scholars[29] believe that the image of the risen Christ, borne aloft by angels at his ascension (see fig. 1), depends upon Late Antiquity images of *apotheosis*, a term coined in the Hellenistic age for the divinization of a mortal being (a hero or ruler) after death.

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[27] Beliar (a variant of Belial) is the name of the devil (cf. 2 Cor 6:15).

[28] For the amazement motif, cf. K. Smolak, "Zur Himmelfahrt Christi bei Synesios von Kyrene," *JÖBG* 20 (1971) 7–30.

[29] A. Kazhdan and A. Cutler, "Apotheosis," *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 141–42.

3. *Christ's Arrival in Heaven*

Chromatius, Gregory of Nyssa, and Ps.-Chrysostom say that, when Christ arrived at the entrance to heaven, the angels called out: "Lift up your heads, o you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in" (Ps 24:7). Then the powers asked: "Who is this King of glory?" (Ps 24:8). The Spirit answered: "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Ps 24:8). This dialogue corresponds with the dialogue when Christ was about to enter Hades.[30] Ps.-Chrysostom tells us that the powers, as they heard their Lord, received him with joy and led him to the highest throne. Then the prophecies of David were fulfilled: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet" (Ps 110:1).

But according to Chromatius the Father did not merely wait for Jesus to return. Rather, God went out to meet Jesus when he returned from his earthly mission. Chromatius argues that the reaching out of the Father to meet Jesus was foretold by Ps 72:24: "You hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterwards you will take me into glory." It is noteworthy that this motif is also found in works of art dating from the fifth century (when Chromatius lived). In figure 2 we see Christ ascending to heaven while holding the hand of God which comes out of a cloud.

Chromatius says that hereafter Christ sat at the right hand of God on the throne which God had prepared for his Son. But he adds that there is just one throne and both God and Christ have the same worthiness. Ps.-Athanasius finds the enthronement of Christ as judge quite ironical since a short while ago the same Christ was standing in front of the throne of Pilate to be condemned to death. On earth the Jews placed a crown of thorny branches on his head, but now Christ gets a crown which is worthy of his divinity. The Jews mocked him, but now hosts of angels praise him.

H. *Old Testament Prefigurations of the Ascension of Christ*

Since the ancient theologians regarded the Scriptures as one harmonious entity, they believed that the person and work of Christ, as recorded in the NT, were prefigured in the OT. This also holds good for the

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[30] Cf. *Descensus ad Inferos* 5.

ascension. Numerous OT statements were regarded as foreshadowing or foretelling Christ's ascent to heaven. Chromatius refers to Isa 63:1, "Who is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson?" He then interprets Edom as "earth," Bozrah as "flesh" (= "body"), and "crimson" as a reference to the shedding of blood at the crucifixion. Thus the words of Isa 63:1 were uttered in amazement by the celestial beings when they saw Christ ascending from the earth to the Father.

Quite a few psalms were interpreted as foreshadowing the ascension. Ps.-Athanasius says that David predicted these events with his lyre and that all his musical notes have become realities. Diadochus quotes Ps 68:18 ("When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train") as a reference to the ascension. The two psalms which were most frequently quoted by the ancient theologians as referring to the ascension are Psalm 23 (24) and Psalm 109 (110). The specific verses in each of these Psalms which were particularly popular in their exegesis are Ps 23 (24):9 ("Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in") and Ps 109 (110):1 ("Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet"). The former was uttered by the angels when Christ arrived at the gates of heaven, and the latter was uttered by God on Jesus' arrival.

Ps.-Chrysostom believes that David had foretold that Christ would ascend upon a cloud when he said: "He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind" (Ps 18:10). The ascension was also a fulfillment of that which is said in the Psalms: "God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets" (47:5). Nestorius-2 is convinced that Daniel too foretold the ascension of Christ when he said: "I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven."

But the ascension was not only predicted by prophetic *utterances* but also by *events* which served as types of Christ's ascent. Ps.-Athanasius says that the innermost sanctuary of the tabernacle represented heaven. This area was inaccessible to people, except for the high priest alone. His entrance each time into this area prefigured Christ's ascension into heaven. To prove his point, Ps.-Athanasius quotes Paul (whom he regards as the author of Hebrews): "For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; *he entered heaven itself*, now to appear for us in God's presence." The high priest's action therefore prepared the people for Jesus' miraculous ascent to the Father, according to Ps.-Athanasius.

I. *The Theological Meaning of the Ascension of Christ*

The homilies of the fourth and fifth centuries were often used by early theologians as a vehicle for their theological views. This is also true of the homilies on the ascension, especially since the latter event conveyed important theological truths. Since the commemoration of the ascension became popular in the fourth century, at a time of christological controversies, one can understand why so many of these sermons touch upon particularly christological issues. Let us now look at some of the more significant theological aspects of ascension.

Chromatius, along with many of the other homilists, emphasizes that Christ ascended to the Father *in bodily form*. He says that at several occasions since the creation God descended from heaven and ascended again (e.g., Gen. 11:5). But this ascension was very different since it was the first time ever that he ascended *with a human body*. But Chromatius makes it very clear that, though Christ ascended with the body of man, he retained his divinity.

Many homilists emphasized the fact that, by ascending to heaven in a human body, Christ transferred our nature to the heavenly regions. Nestorius-1 says that sin removed man from life in paradise, but Christ took our nature back to the throne of God and reconciled it with the Father. When Christ came to the earth, he brought the *divinity* down to us, and when he ascended to heaven, he took our *humanity* to God. Thus Christ acted as mediator for each of the two natures.

Chrysostom also says that the ascension marks the reconciliation of the human race with God. Up to this event, God and man had clearly been at enmity with each other. He also points out the irony that, when we were in paradise, the cherubim had to guard it because of our sinful human nature. Now, because of the ascension, our human nature is in heaven and sits above the cherubim.

In line with the prevailing christological views, it was believed that Christ was God, but that he hid his divinity in the human body. He therefore used this body as a garment to cover his own divinity. Christ was therefore simultaneously God and man and remained in this state when he both descended to Hades and ascended to heaven. Ps.-Chrysostom believes that the duality of the natures of Christ is confirmed by the words of Ps 47:5 ("God has ascended amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets"). When Christ arrived at the throne of God, his divine nature was joined eternally to the Throne of Majesty. Since Christ was the first person who took our body to God, Nestorius-1,

Nestorius-2, Ps.-Athanasius, and Ps.-Chrysostom call him "the firstfruits of our nature" (cf. 1 Cor 15:20). The term "firstfruits" (Greek ἀπαρχή; Latin *primitiae*) comes from a Jewish background. This is an image of the first sample from a crop (fruit or grain) which was offered to God.

Chrysostom elaborates this idea of "firstfruits." He says that in OT times a farmer would take the firstfruits of his crop to God, and because of these firstfruits, God would bless the whole crop. Similarly, since Jesus took the firstfruits of our human nature to God when he ascended to heaven, God will bless the *whole* human nature. This is one of the blessings which has been attained because of the ascension.

But we may argue that Christ should not be regarded as the firstfruits of our nature because he was not the first human being. To counter this argument, Chrysostom refers to Lev 19:23–24: "When you enter the land and plant any kind of fruit tree, regard its fruit as forbidden. For three years you are to consider it forbidden; it must not be eaten. In the fourth year all its fruit will be holy, an offering of praise to the Lord." Thus it is clear, according to Chrysostom, that it is not merely the firstfruits, but the first *good* fruits that should be offered to God. That is why Christ could act as the firstfruits of our nature when he ascended to the Father. Because of his worth and blamelessness, the Father received our nature, saying: "Sit at my right hand" (Ps 110:1). God uttered these words concerning the same nature to whom he had said earlier in Paradise: "For dust you are, and to dust you will return" (Gen 3:19).

Nestorius-1 and Ps.-Athanasius say that the ascension of Christ made heaven accessible to us who are on the earth and it now allows us to reign with him. Gregory of Nyssa quotes Ps 67 (68):18 ("You again went up on high, while you are leading captivity captive") to show that the triumphant King of glory held captive human nature and liberated it from the servitude of sin. And Nilus believes that the ascension of Christ in bodily form confirmed the immortality which awaits us.

Augustine stresses that the ascension of Christ is theologically significant since it carries the hope that we too will ascend to the Father: When the head is taking the lead, it necessarily means that the other members of the body will follow! Or, as Ps.-Chrysostom puts it, Christ's ascension caused us to be counted worthy of His eternal Kingdom. Diadochus believes that, while Jesus was on earth, we did not fully realize the extent of his glory. However, it was only at his ascension that his glory was properly revealed.

J. *The Relation between Christ's Ascension and His Second Coming*

The NT itself links Christ's ascension with his second coming. We read in Acts 1:10–11 that, when Jesus ascended to heaven, two men dressed in white said to the disciples that "this same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." The ancient theologians often argued about the meaning of the words "in the same way." Ps.-Epiphanius suggests that it means that Christ will come *in bodily form*. When he returns to the earth, he will also keep his side which was wounded by the soldier's spear to the front so that the Jews could see whom they had pierced (cf. Rev 1:7). And Augustine believes that just as Christ ascended as both God and man, he will also come again as both God and man. Diadochus states that Christ will descend on a cloud since he ascended on a cloud.

The close relationship which the ancient theologians saw between Christ's ascension and his second coming can clearly be seen in, *inter alia*, the sermon of Chrysostom. When he concludes his sermon on the ascension, he calls upon his audience to look at the ascension of Christ and remember Paul's words: "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of an archangel, . . . and we who are still alive and are left will be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (1 Thess 4:16–17). Thereafter he exhorts his audience to practice righteousness in order to be found worthy of being taken up by the Lord at the Second Coming. Diadochus argues that not only will Christ come on a cloud, but we too will go to the Father on a cloud.

K. *Christ's Ascension and Mary's Assumption*

From the late fourth century, the belief in the ascension of Christ also led to the belief in Mary's assumption into heaven, initially only of her soul.[31] This eventually developed into a belief that Mary was translated to heaven, body and soul. In the East it was believed that Mary merely fell asleep on earth to awake eternally in God. The belief in the *assumptio* of Mary (as opposed to the *ascensio* of Christ[32]) became widespread

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[31] E. LaVerdiere, "Mary," *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (ed. E. Ferguson; New York: Garland , 1990) 586.

[32] Chrysostom himself clearly distinguishes between the terms 'ascension' and 'assumption.' These two terms were also used to distinguish between Christ's and

after Gregory of Tours (d. 593) formulated the belief. He said that Christ and his angels transported the soul of Mary to the heavenly paradise in the presence of all the apostles. Mary's body was "borne on a cloud into paradise, where it was reunited with her soul and now rejoices with the Lord's chosen ones."[33]

There are also traces of this belief in the latest homily from our selection. Eusebius of Alexandria records that in Christ's farewell message on the Mount of Olives he said to his mother that when she wanted to depart this life he would not send angels or archangels to her. Rather he himself would come to receive her soul, which is brighter than the sun and more shining than the moon.

L. *Conclusions*

One is struck by the harmonious nature of all these sermons, which can indeed be regarded as our oldest and our most important sources of the ancient theologians' views of the ascension. It is particularly striking if we take into consideration that these homilies, covering two centuries of theological thought, represent the entire Christian world (the West, the East, and North Africa). Yet there is not one discordant note, and even the heretical homilies convey more or less the same theological ideas (if we may label the two Nestorian homilies as heretical). This indeed proves that Christ's ascension was never a controversial issue and is probably the reason this matter receives so little attention in current studies on the early church.

One should always be very careful when one appeals to writings of both East and West when studying a particular issue since one is obliged to distinguish clearly between the views of these two worlds. As a matter of fact, one should even be sensitive to the different views which prevailed in different areas within each of these two worlds. Nevertheless, in the case of Christ's ascension, we encounter much harmony. But this harmony should not distract us from studying Christ's ascension as seen by the ancient theologians. The ancient homilists uttered profound theological ideas in their sermons on this dogmatic issue.

Elijah's ethereal journeys (cf., e.g., PG 55.213–14). Diadochus acknowledges that the Scriptures use both the terms ἀναβαίνειν and ἐπῆρθαι. But he says that the former is used to refer to the divine nature of Christ, while the latter is used to refer to his human nature.

[33] Gregory of Tours *De gloria martyrum* 4 (PL 71.70).

A CULT FROM PHILADELPHIA: OIKOS RELIGION OR CULTIC ASSOCIATION?

Stanley K. Stowers

The inscription *SIG* 3.985 (= *LSA* 20) has generated a substantial quantity of comment and discussion.[1] Interpreters have seen tendencies in this supposed foundation of a cultic association that are thought to epitomize religious developments in the Hellenistic age and that warrant comparison with early Christianity. Because the inscription highlights important interpretive issues about the Hellenistic age and early Christianity, it deserves further discussion. My modest goal here is to outline an alternative interpretation of this text. The most recent discussion, an important article by S. C. Barton and G. H. R. Horsley, has highlighted its relevance to early Christianity and the development of Hellenistic religion.[2] The significance of the inscription was noted by A. D. Nock early in his career and played a role in two of his books.[3] It is appropriate with a discussion of this text to salute the enduring contributions of Everett Ferguson, who as a student of Nock's has continued and deepened his work on early Christianity in its Hellenistic context.

The editions are based upon a marble stele from Philadelphia in Lydia that has been dated to the late second or first century BCE.[4] The stele records commands given by Zeus in a dream to a certain Dionysius. The commands may have included orders to establish cults to the several gods mentioned on the stele and a series of "moral" instructions. The

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[1] For bibliography including the history of editions, see Otto Weinreich, *Stiftung und Kultsatzungen eines Privatheiligtums in Philadelphia in Lydien* (SHAW 16; Heidelberg: Carl Winters, 1919); Franciszek Sokolowski, *Lois Sacrées de L' Asie Mineure* (Paris: De Boccard, 1955) 20, 53–58, and the following note. I would like to thank Dana Chyung and Emma Wasserman for their invaluable assistance in the research for this article.

[2] "A Hellenistic Cult Group and the New Testament Churches," *JAC* 24 (1981) 7–41.

[3] "The Christian Sacramentum in Pliny and a Pagan Counterpart," *ClRev* 38 (1924) 58–59; "Early Gentile Christianity and Its Hellenistic Background," *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation* (ed. A. E. J. Rawlinson; London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1928); repr. in *Early Gentile Christianity and Its Hellenistic Background* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964) 20–22; *Conversion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933) 216–17.

[4] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 4.

moral instructions together with the provision that the participants include men and women, slave and free are the features that have drawn so much attention and that have been seen as departures from earlier Greek religion and precursors of Christianity.[5] The issues raised by this text are diverse and complex. I will limit my discussion to aspects of the following issues made prominent by its interpreters. First, is the cult and inscription un-Greek and, if so, in what sense? Robert Parker has described our cult from Philadelphia as "a basically un-Greek cult center."[6] Second, is the cult, as most have concluded, a religious association that had its own temple or cultic site with a membership recruited from the wider society? Third, was the cult egalitarian? Fourth, did the cult aim at the moral elevation of its members and of society? I will argue that the positive answers given to these questions are at best only possible interpretations and at worst misleading and simply false.

I want to begin from a proposal made by L. Michael White and argue that the stele represents an elaboration of a household cult.[7] Rather than being the kind of voluntary organization that sought members from the wider world, the cult primarily served a large and complex household, although friends and relatives of the household living outside may also have played a part. Ample evidence exists for household cults that could become very elaborate and that could be very large.[8] An inscription from the early empire lists five hundred members of a cult, including slaves, that were all members of a particular household to which the cult belonged.[9]

The gods as represented on the stele are more fitting for a household cult than a mystery cult or a private temple. Clearly nothing is more typical of the religion of the Greek *oikos* in general than Zeus and Hestia.[10] The only other typical place for this pair is in *polis* cults where

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[5] This interpretation is most fully developed in Barton and Horsley, "Cult Group," but has dominated interpretation from the first editors onward. Sokolowski (*LSA*, 55), for example, writes, "La tendance universaliste et morale des préceptes dérive d'un esprit oriental plutôt que grec."

[6] *Miasma: Pollution and Purification in Early Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983) 325.

[7] *Building God's House in the Roman World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) 45.

[8] Ibid., 26–59.

[9] Achille Vogliano, "La grande iscrizione Bacchia del Metropolitan Museum: I," *AJA* 37 (1933) 215–31; White, *God's House*, 45.

[10] Harald Sjövall, *Zeus im altgriechischen Hauskult* (Lund: Ohlssons, 1931) 7, 94, 115; Süss, "Hestia," *RE* 8, 1277–83. Hereinafter I will employ oikos and polis as

Hestia represents the civic hearth.[11] The chief Olympian god is here called Zeus Eumenes. Since Philadelphia belonged to the empire of Pergamon, it has been thought by some that Eumenes on our stele refers to one of the Attalids, probably Eumenes II, who was divinized after his death and may have been represented as Zeus.[12] Scholarly opinion, however, seems to weigh against connecting the cult of a king with our inscription.[13] Eumenes is attested as an epithet of deities, although by no means a common one.[14] Yet taking the term as a divine epithet is made likely by the fact that line 61 of our text in the prayer at the conclusion of the inscription employs the term adverbially with respect to Zeus's disposition: ἵλεως καὶ εὐμεν]ῶς. The restoration here is probable because the two terms appear as a pair in similar contexts elsewhere.[15] Thus Zeus the Kind or the Benevolent heads this cult. One commits no exaggeration in saying that the traditional Greek oikos cult centered on Zeus and Hestia. The hearth was the traditional place of sacrifice to Zeus in the house, and the connection is captured in the epithets of Zeus as ἐφέστιος and ἑστιοῦχος.[16] The kurios ritually established and maintained the patriarchal hierarchy of the oikos at the hearth. Infants were made members of his household and of his lineage around Hestia, and brides and slaves had rituals of membership there also.[17] The fact that Hestia is explicitly linked with Zeus, in the most likely restoration, as his πάρεδρος makes the cult appear to have a traditional Greek center.

In line 60 of our text, Zeus is called Savior. Zeus Σωτήρ was also important in oikos cults.[18] Some of the best preserved examples of Greek houses come from excavations of Thera and belong to the Hellenistic period contemporary with the cult from Philadelphia. In the courtyard of one house, an altar was discovered with the inscription Ἑστίας καὶ

English loanwords rather than as Greek words.

[11] Süss, "Hestia," 1283–93.

[12] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 48–53; Louis Robert, "Études d'épigraphie grecque," *RevPhil* 60 (1934) 289–90.

[13] E. V. Hansen, *The Attalids of Pergamon* (2d. ed.; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1971) 459.

[14] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 9–10.

[15] E.g., Plato *Lg.* 4.712B; Xen. *Cyr.* 1.6.2; Theocr., 5.18. The reading is followed in all of the editions.

[16] Sjövall, *Zeus*, 115–16; Süss, "Hestia," 1279–80, 1300.

[17] Robert Garland, *The Greek Way of Life* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 94.

[18] Sjövall, *Zeus*, 85–101.

Ζηνός Σωτῆρος ("Hestia and Zeus the Savior").[19] Other altars in houses were inscribed "Zeus the Savior" and "Zeus the Savior and the Good Daimon."[20] Together with certain forms of Zeus and Hestia, probably the most typical household deity is the Good Daimon.[21] All three played a part in Greek domestic religion with mealtime offerings to Hestia and libations to Zeus, especially Soter, and the Good Daimon.[22] Cults to the latter, aside from the household, are rare.[23] In our stele, the Good Daimon appears with Health and with Good Fortune. The three were sometimes featured together in mealtime libations.[24] Good Fortune became a regular partner of the Good Daimon, and sometimes the two were represented anthropomorphically as god and goddess.[25] An inscription that marks the elaboration of a cult of the oikos of a certain Poseidonius of Halicarnassus includes "the Good Daimon of Poseidonius," (i.e., of his own oikos) and "the Good Fortune of his mother and father" (*LSA* 72, 8–10, 34–35).

Xenophon mentions Tyche (Fortune) together with Eudaimonia and Arete (*Mem.* 2.1.26). All three are on our stele. The last two on the list are Nike and the Charitae. Like the divinities already discussed, these two also have good preclassical pedigrees.[26] Nike attends upon Zeus, and her winged representation is omnipresent on coins, vases, and other media, including those found in the domestic sphere. Again Plutos has an ancient Greek pedigree and along with Health is precisely what every kurios wished for his oikos.[27]

Previous interpreters, including Otto Weinreich, who did the most thorough study of the divinities on the stele, have focused on the large number of gods and the number of so-called personifications or

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[19] *IG* 12.3, 1357. *IG* 12.3, 424 can also probably be restored as "Hestia and Zeus Soter."

[20] *IG* 12.3, 430; *IG* 12.3, 1366; cf. 448; *IG* 12.3 suppl. 1319.

[21] For the evidence, but with unconvincing interpretations focused on origins, see Jane E. Harrison, *Themis: A Study of the Origins of Greek Religion* (3d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922) 277–82; Arthur Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* (repr.; New York: Biblo and Tannen, 1965) 2.2, 1125–29.

[22] Cook, *Zeus*, 2.2, 1123–29.

[23] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 31–34, and note 17 above.

[24] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 30–32.

[25] For an inscription with both on what is probably a domestic altar, see *IG* 12.3, 1323. For the representations, see Cook, *Zeus*, 1125.

[26] On the Charitae, Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) 217; on Nike, see Hes. *Th.* 383 and Bacchyl. 11.1.

[27] Weinreich argues (*Stiftung*, 24–31) for restoring καὶ Ὑγείας to line 9, instead of καὶ Σωφροσύνη; Johann Zwicker, "Plutos," *RE*, 1027–52.

abstractions. The former fact has been seen as evidence of a substantial cult site and the latter as representative of a Hellenistic religiosity in which real belief in traditional Greek gods had been replaced by the abstraction of religious or philosophical speculation. I will argue below against the large cult site. The supposed loss of traditional piety involves large and complex issues beyond the scope of this paper. I will simply state my conviction that this supposed change is not supported by the evidence. On a related subject, one can show that the so-called personifications were more widespread in Hellenistic Asia Minor than in classical Athens but they were not unimportant in the latter.[28] When one recognizes the large number of divinities associated with the traditional Greek household and the variability of its cult within certain basic commonalities, our text seems likely to represent the elaboration of an oikos cult.[29] Zeus the Kind and the Savior and Hestia form the center with the Good Daimon not far off. The other Greek divinities have been grouped as the savior gods (8).

We should avoid the tendency of some interpreters to read intimations of otherworldly salvation into this cult.[30] There is nothing here to commend the understanding of it as a mystery cult.[31] Furthermore, there is little evidence that Hellenistic mystery cults had much if anything to do with otherworldly salvation.[32] Instead, the savior divinities of the stele form a list of the blessings that a very pious and insecure kurios would want to seek for his household.

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[28] In Aristophanes' *Peace*, the protagonist establishes a cult to Peace or Eirene at his house. A polis cult to Eirene was established in 374 (Isoc. 15.109) and to Demokratia probably in 403 (Plut. *Mor.* 349F). Figures such as Nike, Plutos, and the Charitae are, of course, a part of Olympian mythology. For the importance of such deities in Asia Minor, see Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 12–31.

[29] On other divinities of the oikos cult, see Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1949) 123–26.

[30] As, for example, in the interpretations of Weinreich and Barton and Horsley.

[31] Most (Barton and Horsley, "Cult Group," 23 n. 73) have restored τὰ μυστήρια at 13 and 41. The ὀρᾶν in 41 makes this restoration more likely, but ὀρᾶν can also be used of viewing rites other than mysteries (e.g., rites of the Anthesteria in [Dem.] 59 *Neara* 73, 85). Furthermore, μυστήρια is used widely of rites other than the so-called mystery religions. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (*Der Glaube der Hellenen* [3d ed.; Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1959] 2.364) called this restoration arbitrary and suggested ἱερά. Another possibility is τὰς θυσίας. These last two may be too short for the available space. I suggest τὰ ἱερόθυτα.

[32] Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987) esp. 1–11.

What then of Agdistis? Does not her presence prove that this was a very un-Greek syncretistic, orientalizing cult? Near the end of the text (52), she is called "the most holy guardian and mistress of this oikos." First, we must not overemphasize the resistance of Greeks to foreign divinities.[33] Even the classical pantheon and classical Athens, in spite of having a strong consciousness of "the foreign," still show examples of the natural tendency of polytheism to accumulate gods.[34] Agdistis was a form of the Great Mother.[35]It is easy to forget that Athens had a temple of the Great Mother by the end of the sixth century BCE and that votives and cult sites show her in every corner of the Greek world by the beginning of the classical period.[36] Is it so un-Greek for Dionysius to worship Agdistis also? Second, Dionysius's text neatly sets Agdistis apart from the cult to the Greek gods while still manifesting her importance. Dionysius reveals her as a redundancy, but that is not surprising in light of his long list of savior gods. He is a person who wants the largest possible insurance policy. She has exactly the same titles as Zeus (or Zeus and Hestia) as guardian and mistress of the household. Already Aeschylus calls Zeus οἰκοφύλαξ (*Suppl.* 24), and the concept persisted.[37] One plausible explanation for this representation of the gods would involve imagining Dionysius, a Greek, acquiring his property from someone who was ethnically Lydian, Anatolian, or Phrygian and for whom Agdistis was the chief god of the place and the household.[38] Such a scenario is plausible for Philadelphia, which was a Greek foundation of the later Hellenistic period within a culture where the Great Mother was prominent. In the logic of Hellenistic or even earlier polytheism, one would probably not eliminate the cult of the god who had guarded the place, but rather keep her cult alongside the newly introduced Hellenic deities of the oikos.

Thus instead of a private temple, "chapel," or association house as interpreters have imagined, we should take our cue from Greek houses

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[33] Robert Garland, *Introducing New Gods* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).

[34] Ibid.

[35] Weinreich, *Stiftung*, 63–66. Again Weinreich, in simply assuming that it is un-Greek and "oriental" for Dionysius to have her cult, does not consider the broader picture of earlier times and the larger Greek world.

[36] Burkert, *Mystery Cults*, 35–36.

[37] *IG* 2.305; Sjövall, *Zeus*, 85, 89, 103, 116.

[38] Perhaps, for instance, he married a native Lydian woman who had inherited the property and the Agdistis cult through lack of male heirs in her family.

of the Hellenistic period. Weinrich argued for a circle of six altars, each to a pair of deities.[39] He, as most others, followed the original editors in restoring ἰδ[ρυμένοι Βωμοί] to line 11.[40] But Barton and Horsley have rightly argued that ἰδ[ρυμένα τὰ ἱερά] is more likely.[41] I suggest that the cult items envisaged in our text include a central altar to Zeus and Hestia, an altar to the Savior Gods and a cult statue, or less likely, some other cult object of Agdistis. Altars inscribed to several gods are easy to find. A household altar base from Teos lists Zeus Ktesios, Zeus Kapetolia, Roma, and the Good Daimon (*CIG* 3074). Our stele locates itself "beside (or with) Agdistis" (τὰ παραγγέλματα ταῦτα ἐτὲθησαν παρὰ Ἄγδιστιν), who is then called the most holy guardian and mistress of the oikos. Thus the inscription itself explicitly describes the fusion of the old and the new household cults. Zeus clearly stands at the center of the Greek cult in the inscription. He gave the commands; he and Hestia are the chief divinities; and the text concludes with a prayer to Zeus Soter. But Agdistis, only mentioned as the stele concludes a list of sanctions to encourage obedience (40–54), accepts, legitimizes, and actively watches over the cult of Zeus and his circle. She thus continues her role paralleling Zeus as guardian of the oikos, but now by supporting the new cult. This reconstruction would be an elaboration of a Greek household cult that could be easily situated in a modest courtyard.

Most interpreters have taken oikos as temple or shrine, a meaning that the word can certainly have.[42] Sokolowski's argument that it also referred to the cultic association itself in some places rather than to the building has also gained support.[43] I believe that a careful reading of oikos in the text will not only show it to be describing a household cult but also put a new light on the supposedly elevated moral rules.[44] The inscription opens by speaking of the commands that were given to Dionysius for the health, common safety, and high reputation of the

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[39] *Stiftung*, 42–44.

[40] Ibid., 8.

[41] "Cult Group," 12, n. 19.

[42] See the more nuanced discussion of Barton and Horsley ("Cult Group," 15–16) who discuss various interpreters.

[43] *LSA*, 55.

[44] It is not entirely clear what interpreters mean by elevated morals. One suspects that they mean something like what they imagine the moral aspect of early Christianity to have been. I suspect that the judgment is made from the perspective of romantic modernism which operates under the illusion that morals are separable from the distribution of power and status in the particular society rather than a principal means for that distribution.

group, "giving entry into his own house (π[ρόσοδον διδόν]τ' εἰς τὸν ἑαυτοῦ) to free men and women and household slaves." Instead of being the announcement of a so-called universal religion open to membership from every class of people, it is, I suggest, a publication of the rules of Dionysius's house and its cult in his courtyard. What is most peculiar about this cult is that rules of the oikos which were normally unwritten and more implicit than explicit have been set up in writing.

"Free men, free women, and household slaves" is not a proclamation of "no discrimination," "widened access," or "equality," but the traditional order of the oikos.[45] It is neither radical nor egalitarian for Dionysius to allow women and slaves to participate in the cult of his oikos. In fact, allowing various roles of participation according to one's place in the hierarchy of the oikos is precisely how the household cult helped maintain the order of the oikos. In regard to religion, the kurios was kurios because the cult belonged to him and had been inherited from his father and because he served as "priest." Slaves served as slaves during sacrifices. In Aristophanes' *Peace*, produced in 421 BCE, Trygaeus's slave makes preparations for the sacrifice, is purified, and participates in the sacrifice (922–1052). This participation includes the dirty work of butchering the animal, but also carrying the sacrificial basket and the purification vessel around the altar and saying a prayer after his master's own. We expect comic exaggeration here, but the basic story is probably typical. The slave does whatever he is commanded to do. Being able to participate in the oikos religion does not make the slave equal with his master, but a slave playing a slave's role in the cult.

Gender differences were highlighted in purity rules that made women more susceptible to pollution.[46] Furthermore, while women were associated with the everyday meals consisting of bread and grain, only men actually performed the sacrifices and handled the sacred innards of the animal at the altar or hearth. Cooking meat for the gods and one's family

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[45] For these descriptions claiming equality and so on, see Barton and Horsley, "Cult Group," 16–17. For an ancient discussion of this order of the oikos, see Aristotle *Pol.* 1.1253b, 1–14, and for modern scholarship on the subject, David L. Balch, "Household Codes," *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament* (ed. David E. Aune; SBLSBS 21; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 25–50.

[46] Stanley K. Stowers, "Greeks Who Sacrifice and Those Who Do Not: Toward an Anthropology of Greek Religion," *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (ed. L. Michael White and O. Larry Yarbrough; Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995) 299–329.

was a man's affair.[47] At such moments, the hearth or domestic altar had to be scrupulously protected from pollution.[48] Although outside the oikos cult itself, numerous votive reliefs are instructive in their depictions of household members. In these scenes, a wife, children, and father often stand before a god or a cult statue.[49] Each has a characteristic role, including the father as leader. The slave is often there too, leading the animal and rendered as a tiny figure to display his status.[50]

Interpreters have debated whether "his own house" means that Dionysius was president of the association or that he merely owned the cult building.[51] The place/social group debate is easily resolved when one attends to the ancient Greek conception of the oikos. The oikos consisted of the human and nonhuman property that belonged to the kurios. It was simultaneously a social group with a few similarities to the modern family and a highly organized collection of human and nonhuman property, including slaves and, often in reality, women.[52] The oikos also had a hereditary principle since the existence of the oikos through generations depended upon insuring the birth and survival of legitimate heirs. The kurios hoped to pass this property to his own male offspring. Wives, slaves, and newborns entered the order of the oikos by means of rituals and sacrificial events conducted by the kurios.[53]

Thus Dionysius's requirement that free men and women and slaves take an oath as they enter his oikos only elaborates the practices of the oikos with Zeus's authority. The oath and its sanctions are the chief purpose of the inscription. These rules consist of safeguards against some of the major internal threats to the existence and prosperity of the oikos. Lines 15–25 form an inclusio by means of references to Dionysius's oikos. When entering the oikos, free men, women, and slaves are to swear concerning certain prohibitions (15), and in the conclusion of the

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[47] Stowers, "Greeks Who Sacrifice," 299–329.

[48] Plutarch frg. 91; Süss, "Hestia," 1280–81.

[49] F. T. Van Straten, *HIERA KALA: Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (RGRW 127; Leiden: Brill, 1995), e.g., R27 (Van Straten's catalog) and his discussion of several such scenes, 53–99.

[50] E.g., *HIERA KALA*, 65 (27).

[51] Barton and Horsley, "Cult Group," 16 and nn. 41–42.

[52] Although free women were not considered by the ancient Greeks to be property, from our modern vantage point, they were clearly treated as such. With a few exceptions, for instance, women always had to be under the control of a kurios. Husbands and fathers determined the fate of the women under them without any independent protection from the law available for the women.

[53] Stowers, "Greeks Who Sacrifice."

section, they must swear to be well intentioned toward "this oikos." The prohibitions in the oath include those against the use of poisons, spells, love potions, abortificients, contraceptives, and anything fatal to children. The items in the oath involve practices that threaten the life and clear lineage of his children and the breeding of slaves, new property for the kurios. We must never forget that the ancient domestic economy depended entirely on the labor of slaves and women.

The best commentary on these practices are domestic dramas in court cases of the Attic orators, magical spells and manuals, and Greek romances. In the latter, slaves conniving to get love struck young men into the women's quarters, aiding elopments, and supplying potions is standard fare.[54] Surely such stories reflect real-life anxieties of masters. I need hardly mention that the Attic orators are replete with vivid examples of how questionable legitimacy and the death of male heirs could cause generations of bitter dispute over property and status and even the destructions of houses. Antiphon (5.14–19) provides an apt example of the use of poisons and potions within the oikos. A certain Philoneus was sacrificing to Zeus Ktesios, Zeus of the household property, and invited his mistress and a friend. As they were pouring the libation at the end of the meal, the mistress, fearful that Philonius had lost affection for her, added what she believed to be a love potion to their wine. The potion was poison, and both men died. Presumably, Dionysius hoped to insure against such tragedies by putting the members of his oikos into an obligation of fidelity sanctioned by his many powerful gods.

The prohibition of a man from having sex with another man's wife whether free or slave and with boys or girls is striking, but if this is an oath of entry into membership in Dionysius's oikos and participation in his household cult, these injunctions provide security for the social order of his oikos. In a world based on the idea of blood and lineage, every kurios wished to be free from the sexual threats that other men posed to his oikos. As the stele enjoins (31–32), "anyone who does any of the things written above, let him not enter into this house." These injunctions which the gods will enforce may apply also to Dionysius. One must admit that such restrictions would be unusual for a kurios. Even so, social and cultural historians have recently argued that the late Hellenistic period and early empire saw an increasing sexual symmetry between men and women that is especially prominent in the Greek

[54] E.g., Achilles Tatius, 2.19–28.

novel.[55] But even admitting this trend which may help explain these lines, we must not too easily fall under the illusion of some sort of sexual equality. The inscription unambiguously follows traditional Greek household culture in viewing the free women, especially wives, as the chief threat to the oikos and its cult.

Lines 35–50 single them out and make them a focus of anxiety:

> A free woman is to be pure and not to know the bed of, or to have sexual intercourse with, another man, but only with her own husband. But if she does know, she is not pure but polluted and full of defilement affecting the family and unworthy to worship this god whose sacred things have been set up. She is not to be present at the sacrifices, nor to strike against the purifications and cleansings, nor to see the sacred things. But if she does do any of these things, from the time the injunctions have been inscribed, she will have evil curses from the gods for [disregarding] these injunctions.[56] For the god does not want . . .

The injunctions specify "free woman," meaning principally the wife of a kurios. Nothing is said about slave women because it is only the free wife who is relevant to producing legitimate heirs.

This passage has been seen as wildly un-Greek, orientalizing, and a presage of Christianity because it supposedly replaces "mere ritual purity" with universal ethical values. I suggest another, more Greek interpretation. For the Greeks, ἁγνός ordinarily meant pure, that is, in a state fit to enter a holy place, a place where the gods were present. It was different from what we call morals or ethical action in being independent of human intention.[57] A person in a house where a childbirth occurred was polluted even if the person was unaware of the birth. Greeks definitely did connect moral concerns with their religion, even if cultic purity was conceptually distinct from morality, even morality sanctioned by the gods. Impurity is by definition a temporary state. Time, lustrations, and sacrificial practices were means by which particular states of pollution might be remedied. One important fact that seems to have gone unnoticed by interpreters of the stele is that, while it

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[55] Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, vol. 2, *L'usage des plaisirs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); vol. 3, *Le souci de soi* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984); David Konstan, *Sexual Symmetry* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[56] In 1. 44, παρορῶσα is entirely restored and rightly considered speculative by Barton and Horsley ("Cult Group," 21). I see no reason, however, to accept their suggestion that part of the section may be referring to both men and women.

[57] Well brought out in Robert Parker, *Miasma.*

mentions rules of purity for the household cult, these are missing from the inscription.

One thing makes this inscription very different from typical foundation documents of religious associations: what is essential is missing. We have no priesthoods, leadership, or organization, nothing about financing, no calendar of sacrifices and festivals, and no purity rules for the conduct of the cult. Our text speaks of the "injunctions given for the performance of the purifications, the cleansings and the holy things (or holy sacrifices), in accordance with the ancestral customs and as has now been written" (12–14). Ordinarily the "ancestral customs," or more precisely the "things of the fathers," would be all that went with the oikos cult that the kurios had inherited, including the sacrifices and purity practices. As I have said, these normally unwritten rules of the oikos cult, perhaps already expanded, are not on the stele, but the stele mentions them. On the stele are rules of behavior for the household in the form of an oath to be secured with sanctions enforced by the gods. Oaths were extremely important to the Greeks and supported almost every aspect of the social order. Lycurgus could say (*Leocrates* 79) that society is held together by oaths and point out that every citizen in Athens took oaths of fidelity to the city and its institutions. Oaths were still important in the Hellenistic age. The insecure Dionysius with the aid of Zeus, god of the oikos and of oaths, attempted to ensure the loyalty and security of his household by attaching an oath to his household cult.

Two things I believe have misled scholars, causing them to read the text as if it were Christian. First, to the Christian or Kantian ear it sounds universal: for example, "Free women are to be pure." But such wording, found in other Hellenistic cultic inscriptions, would be appropriate for a large oikos that might have several free women in it and that often invited guests from other households for feasts.[58] Second, interpreters have assumed that the adulterous woman in the text is permanently polluted. If this were the case, it would no longer be a matter of cultic purity. Barton and Horsley translate μύσους ἐμφυλίου as "endemic pollution," which might possibly suggest the idea of being permanently polluted. The word ἐμφύλιος, however, is an extremely

[58] See Parker, *Miasma*, 75, 94–97, on the Hellenistic cultic rules regarding adultery and illicit sex. Rather than explain this change as due to the influence or corruption of "oriental religion," I would suggest that it was due to the greater sexual symmetry (see n. 55 above).

common term that indicates something affecting a community (usually) based on the idea of blood relations. It is the common adjective for civil, internecine, or intrafamilial strife. The woman who swears falsely or breaks the oath literally threatens to pollute the lineage of her kurios and his oikos. Standard Greek cultic rules, including for the oikos cult, treated sexual intercourse as a mild form of pollution to be purified by time and washing. A number of postclassical cults introduced rules that made forms of extramarital intercourse more polluting than marital sex.[59] But again we should avoid seeing a radical disjunction with the classical period.

I see no reason why normal practices of purification would not have taken care of an adulterous woman's impurity, even if the stele treats such pollution as especially severe. But another dimension of the situation complicates matters. Recovering ritual purity would not have been sufficient to reconcile the woman either to her kurios or to the gods. The woman envisaged has also broken an oath probably made during a sacrificial rite at the altar that involves touching the inscription. At the Athenian Anthesteria certain priestesses swore an oath while touching the victims at the altar, including "I am pure and cleansed and pure from all that is unclean and from sex with a man."[60] The stele differs in that the oaths concern moral and not ritual behavior. But oaths that involved declaring or committing oneself to "moral" behavior were extremely common in classical Athens.[61] An instance from Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (7.7–8) is quite striking. At the prompting of Socrates, the gentleman farmer Ischomachus explains that he did not begin the education of his bride in the virtues of a wife "until I had sacrificed (ἔθυσα) and prayed that I might teach well and that she might learn what was best for us both." Furthermore, "she joined in his sacrificing" and "vowed fervently to the gods that she should become the sort of wife she ought to be."[62] Here, in a classical text that purports to depict traditional ideal behavior, one finds the use of a sacrificial vow at the domestic altar to promote the virtues of the mistress of the oikos.

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[59] Ibid.

[60] [Dem.] 59 *Neara* 78.

[61] Jon D. Mikalson, *Athenian Popular Religion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1983) 31–38.

[62] Some editors believe that words including a coordinate δέ have dropped out in the manuscripts after ὑπίσχνουμένη μέν. This conclusion is not a necessary one, although certainly possible. At any rate, the issue does not affect my point.

The stele is confusing for us because it seems to conflate what was probably basically distinct to the ancient community. The woman might purify herself cultically, but that pollution and subsequent purification are separate from swearing and breaking an oath before a god. As the stele says, the god will send evil curses because the god wants obedience and will inflict great punishments on those who transgress. She is not to be present at the sacrifices or "to strike against the purifications and cleansings" (39–41). Even if ritually pure by the rules, an oath breaker would make a mockery of the sanctity of the rites if she were to participate. The solemn touching of the sacred objects in oath taking would become a striking out against the rites. [Ps.] Demosthenes says that the adulterous woman is not permitted to attend or even see (ὁρᾶν) public sacrifices and spectacles and cites a law to this effect (59 *Neara* 85–87). The woman here may not be literally in a state of pollution, but she, according to the logic, is unfit to be at a holy site.[63]

Cult and behavior (morals) came together in oath practices. The stele invokes the gods, the purity, and sacrificial practices because the oath is sworn by means of these. The rites constitute a transaction with the gods. Typically, oaths involved the sacrifice of an animal. The oath taker approached the altar in a state of purity. At the most charged moment of the rite when the animal's flesh was rendered to the god, the oath taker swore while touching the sacred meat or the altar where the meat was burning.[64] The stele specifies that at "the monthly and yearly sacrifices let those men and women who have confidence in themselves touch this inscription on which the injunctions of the god have been written, in order that those who obey these injunctions and those who do not may be revealed" (55–59). The members are to renew their oaths regularly. The stele was probably incorporated into an altar or within the sacred circle around the altar. The oath, sacrifices, purity, touching, and gods are typically Greek, but I do not know of good precedents for the continual renewal of the oath or for the role in the cult given to the written text. These may be genuinely new developments in a basically Greek cult.

Previous scholarship on the inscription from Philadelphia has been guided by a questionable set of assumptions. For one, scholars assume some version of the view that with the Hellenistic age came a change

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[63] Parker, *Miasma*, 74–97, makes the general point very well.

[64] Stanley K. Stowers, "Truth, Identity and Sacrifice in Classical Athens" (an unpublished paper).

from the integrated world of the classical polis to a rootless individualism. This change saw the loss of adherence to traditional Greek religion and the rise of voluntary religious organizations that made religion a matter of choice. If this sounds like the transformation from the medieval world to modernity and industrial society, that is, I believe, because the historians who first drafted this interpretation used their own historical experience as a model for interpreting the Hellenistic age. I would argue, however, that one can still see Greek religion oriented to the polis and continuing practices in the household that helped make Greeks Greeks and that maintained what one can still clearly recognize as the oikos.

This religion is not so voluntaristic. If I am correct, most of the participants of this cult were such by virtue of their membership in the oikos. For a wife, child, or slave, membership was entirely by the will of the kurios. In this, there is no change from the classical period. Even in early Christianity, new members normally seem to have attached themselves to the new religion by households. Exceptions probably often meant the breakdown of the oikos, as even early Christian discourse against loving family more than Christ suggests. Scholars of the inscription from Philadelphia have used the language of post-Cartesian religion for interpreting the stele. They have been impressed by a cult which seems "to allow membership to all on an equal basis." But this language is only appropriate for salvationist religions that divide the person between a body and a soul, mind, will, or some other version of a true self. Parallel to this psychology is a distinction between all the saved within the religion and all those outside who are lost. With these conditions, religious meaning can focus on "joining." The most basic and important religious fact is whether one is in the group or not. One can simply ignore the hierarchy of power and identity in the society (and the religion) because saving or losing the true self is what matters. The cult from Philadelphia simply does not fit this model. Its cult practices and its gods belong to the practices and the pantheon of the city, the wider society. There is no illusion that the hierarchy of the social body does not matter to religion. Instead, the practice of the cult serves to negotiate and integrate each person into a particular identity in the order of the oikos and to situate the oikos in a complex context of social and cosmic meaning.

THE APPROPRIATE, THE NECESSARY, AND THE IMPOSSIBLE: FAITH AND REASON IN HEBREWS

James W. Thompson

The legacy of patristic theology is the use of Greek philosophy to interpret and defend the Christian credo on rational grounds for the benefit of both the cultured despisers and the faithful.[1] Adolf Harnack said of Irenaeus that he did not merely confine himself to describing the fact of redemption, "but he also attempted to explain the peculiar nature of this redemption from the essence of God and the incapacity of man, thus solving the question of *cur deus homo* in the highest sense."[2] C. J. De Vogel makes a similar comment about Clement of Alexandria, who employed the metaphysics of Plato and the logic of Aristotle to demonstrate the truth of Christian claims. De Vogel says that Clement more than anyone else "quite consciously laid the foundation on which in the Middle Ages Thomas Aquinas constructed his theology built on the substructure of natural reason."[3] A Christian philosophy, therefore, began in the second century and dominated Western thought until the Reformation.[4]

Although Clement played a pivotal role in the appropriation of Greek rationalism, he actually built on the foundation of his predecessors in Alexandria, Aristobulus and Philo.[5] They, along with others in the Alexandrian school, employed philosophy to ensure that the interpretation of Scripture was in accord with reason. Clement inherited the traditions of his Alexandrian Jewish predecessors. My purpose in this article is to examine the extent to which this tradition that extends from the background to the foreground of the NT is present in a meaningful way also within the NT. Because the Epistle to the Hebrews has numerous

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[1] E. P. Meijering, "Wie platonisierten Christen? Zur Grenzziehung zwischen Platonismus, kirchlichem Credo und patristischer Theologie," *VC* 28 (1974) 17.

[2] A. Harnack, *History of Dogma* (New York: Dover, repr. 1961) 2.289.

[3] C. J. De Vogel, "Platonism and Christianity: A Mere Antagonism or a Profound Common Ground?" *VC* 39 (1985) 22.

[4] De Vogel, "Platonism and Christianity," 1.

[5] On Clement's indebtedness to Philo, see David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature* (CRINT 3.3: Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993) 137–43.

linguistic contacts with Philo and later becomes an important book in Alexandrian Christianity,[6] it provides a potential link in the Alexandrian tradition that employed philosophy to explain and defend the faith. Consequently, the focus of this article is on the place of the Epistle to the Hebrews within this Alexandrian tradition that Clement inherited. With this study I wish to honor my esteemed colleague and former teacher, Everett Ferguson, who, through his publications and his university courses, has been a major contributor to our knowledge of the NT, its background and its foreground.

Rational Argument in Hebrews

Previous studies of the relationship of Philo and Hebrews have analyzed the affinities between the two authors in vocabulary, exegetical traditions, and exegetical method. In this study, I shall examine an aspect of the argumentation of Hebrews that has been noted but not examined in detail: the author's appeal throughout the book to axiomatic principles that appear to be self-evident to the readers. In addition to his appeal to Scripture, he consistently appeals to principles that are "beyond dispute" (cf. 7:7). These principles involve specifically the categories of the *fitting*, the *necessary*, and the *impossible*. With these categories, the author has introduced into the argument an appeal to reason that has no parallel in the Old and New Testaments.

Like his successors in the patristic period, the author supports the Christian confession on rational grounds. In one of the initial soteriological statements, the author says of God that "it was fitting for him" (ἔπρεπεν τῷ αὐτῷ) to make the pioneer of our salvation perfect through suffering (2:10). In 2:17 he says that the savior "ought" (ὤφειλεν) to be like his brothers. In 7:26 he argues that "it was fitting for us" (ἡμῖν καὶ ἔπρεπεν) that we should have the high priest whose qualities are described.

The author never explains why it was fitting for God to provide this salvation through suffering.[7] Instead, he consistently appeals to "the

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[6] See Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of Our Salvation* (BGBE 15; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Siebeck], 1973).

[7] John Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice in the Letter to the Hebrews* (SNTSMS 75; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 117: "It is one of the most striking features of sacrificial customs that they persistently defy explanation, yet this author repeatedly refers to ritual matters without explanation or with only a dogmatic reason

same curious logic"[8] when he affirms the *necessity* (ἀνάγκη) of the sacrifice of Christ and the introduction of a new priesthood. A change in the priesthood "of *necessity*" (ἐξ ἀνάγκης) involves a change in the law. According to the law, the daily sacrifices were *necessary* (ἀνάγκη, 7:27), and the cleansing of the copies of the things in the heavens at the ritual of the Day of Atonement was also *necessary* (ἀνάγκη, 9:23). The author argues also that death is *necessary* (ἀνάγκη) for the ratification of the covenant (9:16).

Although, according to the author, the levitical sacrifices were necessary to "cleanse the copies of the heavenly things," a better sacrifice was necessary in order to cleanse "the heavenly things" (9:23). Without the once-for-all sacrifice, the savior "would have had to suffer repeatedly" (ἐπεὶ ἔδει αὐτὸν πολλάκις παθεῖν, 9:26). The author argues his point by appealing to the category of the impossible to demonstrate the necessity of the sacrifice of Christ. The Christ event, which included both the death and exaltation of Christ, is the oath of God, for whom "it is impossible to lie" (ἀδύνατον ψεύσασθαι, 6:18). Only his sacrifice was effective because levitical sacrifices were "not able (οὐδέποτε δύναται) to perfect those who drew near," inasmuch as "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin" (10:4). The believer responds in faith because "without faith it is impossible to please God" (11:6). For the believer who has once been enlightened and then falls away, "it is impossible to restore this person to repentance" (6:4–6).

The author explains neither why salvation is "impossible" without the sacrifice of Christ and the faith of the believer (11:6) nor why this sacrifice was both "necessary" and "fitting for God." The argument rests, not on Scripture, but on self-evident principles which the author assumes that his readers share. Both divine deed and human response, therefore, are determined by necessity.

Although the language of appropriateness and necessity has faint echoes elsewhere in Scripture, only the author of Hebrews employs it to argue that the Christian confession conforms to necessity. Forms of πρέπειν are employed in the LXX of the Psalms to describe the "holiness that befits God's house" (93:5) and in ethical contexts where the term is used with Stoic overtones to describe appropriate human conduct

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which itself demands to be explained."

[8] Dunnill, *Covenant and Sacrifice*, 118.

(1 Cor 11:13; 1 Tim 2:10; Tit 2:1).[9] Neither ἀνάγκη nor ἀδύνατον is used outside Hebrews in a soteriological context. The pervasiveness of this argument, which W. Übelacker calls "metapropositional,"[10] suggests that the author is appealing to common assumptions that are based on the structure of reality.[11] Unlike the apostle Paul, who acknowledges that the cross is wisdom to the initiated but foolishness to the world (1 Cor 2:6), the author appeals to rational argument to persuade his readers and to provide the basis for his exhortations.

The argument represents such a remarkable departure from the common soteriological reflection in Scripture that one must ask who would have been persuaded by it. The linguistic associations with Philo are so great that numerous scholars have suggested that Philo and the larger philosophical tradition provide the context in which the argument would be persuasive. C. Spicq commented on the use of πρέπειν, for example, "L'argument théologique de convenance ἔπρεπεν θεῷ, inconnu de la Bible, est employé par les écrivains profanes et particulièrement par Philon."[12] This view is also held in the commentaries of Windisch,[13] Hans-Friedrich Weiß,[14] E. Grässer, and others.

When one compares Hebrews with Philo and the wider philosophic tradition on precisely *what* was fitting for God, one must ask how the argument of Hebrews would have been persuasive, for the claim of Hebrews that the sacrifice of Christ was "fitting for God" is a remarkable *tour de force* in the ancient context, where the association of God with human suffering would have been abhorrent. E. Fascher has correctly said that what Hebrews claims of God "is the very thing which calls into question the deity of God."[15]

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[9] On the significance of τὸ πρέπον in ethical contexts, see M. Pohlenz, "Τὸ πρέπον. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des griechischen Geistes," *Kleine Schriften* (ed. H. Dörrie; Hildesheim: Olms, 1965) 1.100–115.

[10] W. Übelacker, *Der Hebräerbrief als Appell* (CJ 21; Lund: Wallin and Dalholm, 1989) 166.

[11] E. Grässer, *An die Hebräer* (EKK; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990) 1.90.

[12] C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux* (Études bibliques; Paris: Gabalda, 1952) 1.53.

[13] Hans Windisch, *Der Hebräerbrief* (HNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1931) 21.

[14] Hans-Friedrich Weiß, *Der Brief an die Hebräer* (KEKNT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1991) 204.

[15] E. Fascher, "Theologische Beobachtungen zu δεῖ," in *Neutestamentliche Studien für Rudolf Bultmann* (BZNW 21; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1957) 27. Cf. Harold Attridge, *The Epistle to the Hebrews* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1989) 82: "The use of the term in this context is a rather bold move, since in Greek and Greco-Jewish theology it would not have been thought 'proper' to associate God with the world of suffering."

The extraordinary claim of Hebrews presses the question of this article further: Does the author of Hebrews reflect developments within a tradition that extends from Philo to Clement? Ronald Williamson concluded, on the basis of a comparison of ἔπρεπεν θεῷ in Hebrews and Philo, that the similarities between the two authors were merely verbal. "But what the Writer of Hebrews says 'it behoved' God to do is something that to Philo was utterly abhorrent and repugnant. Philo could never have said it was fitting for God to do what the Writer of Hebrews says He has fittingly done by means of the sufferings of Christ."[16] As persuasive as Williamson's case may sound, it is weakened by his use of a very small sampling of verbal parallels in Philo where forms of πρέπειν are used, thus ignoring a wide range of passages in Philo where synonyms are used to express a major concept. Ancient writers used a variety of synonyms to express what is "fitting for God," including προσήκω, θέμις, ἁρμόττον, and ἄνοικεν.[17] One can assess the evidence only through an examination of the wider range of expressions in the relevant literature and through an understanding of the larger purposes of the respective authors.

Appropriateness and Necessity in the Philosophical Literature

Arguments from necessity, appropriateness, and (im)possibility were commonplace in Greco-Roman rhetoric and philosophy.[18] Indeed, as W. Jaeger recognized,[19] this argument extended from the rationalism of Xenophanes in the sixth century BCE to the church fathers. The argument is actually directed against the Christians by the heirs of the Platonic

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[16] Ronald Williamson, *Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews* (ALGHS 4; Leiden: Brill, 1970) 92.

[17] O. Dreyer, *Untersuchungen zum Begriff des Gottgeziemenden in der Antike* (Spudasmata 24; Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1970) 152.

[18] J. Martin, *Antike Rhetorik* (Munich: Beck, 1974) 68. Appeals to the possible (or impossible), necessary (ἀναγκαῖον, that which is not in our power), and appropriate (πρέπον) were commonplace in Greek oratory. See also Pohlenz, 106–9. See Alan C. Mitchell, "The Use of πρέπειν and Rhetorical Propriety in Hebrews 2:10," *CBQ* 54 (1992) 681–701, for the rhetorical concept of propriety in speech. Contrary to Mitchell's view, the issue in Hebrews is an argument based on propriety, necessity, and (im)possibility, not on God as persuasive speaker.

[19] W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1947) 50.

tradition. For Celsus, the Christian claim of the incarnation contradicts the most basic assumptions about the deity. Celsus argues:

> God is good, beautiful, happy, he lives in the most ideal circumstance. If he comes down to humankind, then a change (μεταβολή) would be necessary, that is a change from good to bad, from the beautiful to the shameful, from happiness to misery, from the best to the worst. But who would choose such a change? The nature of the mortal is to be changed, but the nature of the immortal is to remain always the same. Thus God would not assume such a change.[20]

In directing his argument against the Christian understanding of the incarnation, Celsus employed the rational critique that began with Xenophanes and continued throughout late antiquity, eventually being adopted also by the Christian apologists. The foundation of the argument was that the gods were not like humankind. Xenophanes said of the deity, "He always remains in the same place, never moving, and it is not appropriate for him to move from place to place." This criterion became the center of Xenophanes' critique. Hence he criticized Homer for attaching "to the gods everything that is blameworthy when practiced by humans: stealing, adultery, and betrayal." All of these deeds are ἔργα ἀθέμιστα (frg. 12), deeds that violate human law. What is not θέμις for humankind is not permitted for the gods.[21]

Subsequent philosophical critique developed Xenophanes' criticism of the anthropomorphic depiction of the gods. Most of the discussion was cast in the negative as the philosophers described what was both inappropriate and impossible for the gods. The result of the critique was that Plato and his heirs argued for the banishing of such inappropriate stories while the Stoics chose to save them through allegory. Celsus's metaphysical argument was based on Plato's words in *Rep.* 380. This understanding of God as perfect and immutable became the criterion for appropriateness in Plato's critique of the gods of Homer and Hesiod. For Plato, the more perfect something is, the less it is subject to change. Thus the deity is unchangeable and, hence, without πάθος. Consequently, Plato argued that, since change is impossible for the gods who want no change (*Rep.* 381c; 383a), all accounts which portray the gods contrary to this nature are inappropriate. Gods do not lament and cry (*Rep.* 388b). Stories of revenge and cruelty are to be buried in silence

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[20] Origen *Contra Celsum* 4.14, cited in W. Maas, *Unveränderlichkeit Gottes* (PTS 1; Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1974) 133.

[21] Dreyer, *Gottgeziemenden*, 21.

(*Rep.* 378a). Nor are stories of the wars of the gods to be permitted (*Rep.* 378c). Similarly inappropriate are stories of Hera's fettering by her son and the hurling of Hephaestus by his father when he was trying to save his mother from a beating (378d). Nor can gods lie; the god Apollo cannot lie, for it is not appropriate (οὐ γὰρ θέμις αὐτῷ).

Plutarch's role as priest of Apollo makes him of special interest in the developments of the rationalist critique. With Plato, Plutarch affirms that God is good and cannot be the source of evil. He attributes to Apollo the characteristics of deity. In his essay *De Iside et Osiride*, he also attributes to Osiris the characteristics of deity. Osiris is free from corruption and death (382E) and is ἀπαθής (373B), above change (373A). These characteristics determine what is not appropriate or possible for God. Because the deity is immutable and without passion, he cannot beget since "begetting contradicts the unchangeableness of the divine no less than being born, for procreation is a change and a passion" (πάθος). Moreover, ἡδονή and ὀργή are inappropriate for the gods, as is bodily union between gods and humans.[22]

Although Plutarch held to the separation of gods from humankind, he struggled with the question of whether Plato could be the son of Apollo. When Tyndares the Lacedaemonian said, "It is *fitting* (ἄξιον μεν ἐστιν) to celebrate Plato with the line, 'He seemed the scion not of mortal man but of a god,'" Plutarch went to great lengths to preserve the account of Plato's origins. Such a birth, Plutarch concedes, is a change and a πάθος (*Quaest. conviv.* 8.1.3.717F), appropriate only for mortals. Plutarch, however, preserves the story by explaining that Plato was conceived, not by a physical relationship like a man's but by some other kind of contact or touch, by other potencies that are suitable for a god.[23] Here one notes the extent to which Plutarch's religious commitment comes into conflict with his philosophical position. When faced with accounts of the gods which conflict with his Platonic philosophy, he declares that the gods do their deeds in another way, thus preserving his religious convictions from the effects of the rationalist critique.

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[22] Maas, *Unveränderlichkeit*, 68; Dreyer, *Gottgeziemenden*, 581.

[23] Dreyer, *Gottgeziemenden*, 57.

Philo of Alexandria

Philo is the heir of a Jewish philosophical tradition which had already attempted to reconcile revelation and reason and to describe what is appropriate for God. His predecessor Aristobulus had already adopted the Stoic tradition of allegory in order to overcome the problems created by anthropomorphic portrayals of God. Aristobulus encouraged his readers to "hold fast the fitting (ἁρμόζουσαν) conception of God, and not to fall off into a fabulous anthropomorphic constitution."[24] What was most unfitting, according to Aristobulus, was the idea of the divine descent into human affairs. Philo shares with his predecessor the concern for appropriate concepts of God; thus he employs the concepts of the fitting (τὸ πρέπον, πρέπειν), the impossible (τὸ ἀδύνατον), and the necessary (ἀναγκαῖον) to speak of God and the human response to God. As the tractate *Quod Deus immutabilis sit* indicates, Philo has appropriated the Platonic conception of the transcendent and immutable God, and he has found this basic conviction expressed in the Torah's claim that "God is not like man" (Num 23:19). Philo uses this criterion to determine what is fitting, necessary, and impossible for God. As the transcendent one, God needs nothing from humankind (*De conf. ling.* 175; *Quod det. pot.* 55). "To be everywhere and nowhere is his property alone, . . . and it is against all principle (θέμις) to say that the Maker is contained in anything that he has made" (*De conf. ling.* 136). The Existent One can contain, but cannot be contained (οὐ περιέχεσθαι θέμις, *De mig. Abr.* 182). Philo follows the Platonic tradition in his claim that God is without passion (παντὸς πάθους ἀμέτοχος [*De Abr.* 202]).[25] God's distance from humankind is to be seen also in the fact that he can neither be deceived (οὐχ . . . διαψευσθῆναι δύναται) nor repent (*De vit. Mos.* 1.283) of his deeds.

This view of God is the basis for Philo's frequent comments about what is appropriate for God. God must (ἀναγκαῖον) be ever active and never passive (*Quod det. pot.* 61);[26] He acts but is never acted upon. Just

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[24] Eusebius *Praeparatio evangelica* 8.10.2 (trans. Edwin H. Gifford in Eusebius, *Preparation for the Gospel* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, repr. 1981] 407).

[25] Cited in Maas, *Unveränderlichkeit*, 115. Cf. *Quod Deus immut.* 52: The existent cannot be seized by passion.

[26] See also *De opif. mund.* 4–8 for the two primal principles. In describing the two primal principles, Philo's claim is very similar to that of Cicero *Academica posteriora*, which summarizes the teachings of Antiochus of Ascalon. Thus Philo may be following Antiochus of Ascalon here. See Richard A. Horsley, "The Law of Nature in Philo and

as in human existence there is a subject and a servant, "so in the universe there must be (ἀνάγκη) one, who alone can rightly (πρεπῶδες) claim that all things are his possessions" (*De cher.* 83). Because God is absolute goodness, it is fitting (ἁρμόττον) that he give only good gifts (*De Abr.* 143) by his own agency, for "it may not be" (θέμις δὲ οὐδέν) that his gifts are imperfect (*Sacr.* 57; cf. *De Abr.* 268). In the same way, it is also fitting (πρέπει) for God to plant virtues in the soul (*Leg. all.* 1.48).

Philo's major task is to interpret the Bible in such a way as to avoid inappropriate portrayals of God. Philo consistently interprets stories in order to ensure God's distance from the world, for God's nature forbade (οὐ θέμις) that he touch limitless chaotic matter (*De spec. leg.* 1.329). Consequently, Philo frequently refers to the mediating powers which God commissioned to execute his will on earth. In *De conf. ling.* 171 he describes how the one God employs numberless Potencies to execute his will. After Philo says in 174 that "it must not be" (οὐ θέμις) that his angelic powers desert the ranks, he adds in 175, "The king may fitly (ἐμπρεπές) hold converse with his powers and employ them to serve in matters which should not be consummated by God alone."[27] Although God is not in need of anything, "yet seeing what was fitting (πρέπον) to himself and the world which was coming into being, He allowed his subject powers to have the fashioning of some things." Philo then applies this principle to the creation of humankind: "Thus it was meet and right (προσηκόντως) that when man was formed, God should assign a share in the work to His lieutenants, as He does with the words 'let *us* make men. . .'" (179). Philo makes a similar argument about the giving of the ten commandments, which well befitted (ἱεροπρεπῶς) his holiness. Philo adds, however, that "it was in accord with his nature (ἦν γὰρ ἁρμόττον αὐτοῦ) that the pronouncements in which the special laws were summed up should be given in his person, but the particular laws by the mouth of the most perfect of the prophets whom He selected" (*De decal.* 175).

Philo is especially concerned to demonstrate that all forms of punishment are inappropriate for God. Because God is the cause of good things only, "it best becomes him (ἐμπρεπέστατον) that the work of his own hands should be akin to his nature, . . . but that the chastisement of the wicked should be through his underlings" (*De conf. ling.* 180). Inasmuch

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Cicero," *HTR* 71 (1978) 45.

[27] Translation by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker in the LCL.

as nothing that leads to destruction should have its origin in him whose nature is to save, "it was meet (ἔδει) while mankind was judged to deserve correction that the fountains of God's ever-flowing gifts of grace should be kept free . . . from evil" (*De conf. ling.* 182).

In several of his tractates, Philo repeats the claim that God can be the source of neither punishment nor evil. According to *De fug.* 66, "it is unbecoming (ἀπρεπές) for God to punish, seeing that he is the original lawgiver." Consequently, "God deemed it necessary (ἀναγκαῖον) to assign the creation of evil things to other makers, reserving that of good things to Himself alone." In the same way, Philo insists in *De Abr.* 143 that, because it was fitting (ἁρμόττον) for the Existent to give good gifts by his own agency, he left the opposite of good gifts to his ministers. According to *De decal.* 178, "it befits (ἐμπρέπει) the servants and lieutenants of God that, like generals in wartime, they should bring vengeance to bear upon deserters who leave the ranks of justice, for it befits (ἐμπρεπές) the great King that the general safety of the universe be ascribed to him." When Philo examines the account of the creation of humankind, which has an inclination for both virtue and vice, he likewise argues that "it is most proper (οἰκειότατον) to God the universal Father to make the excellent things by himself alone, because of their kinship to him," and then concludes that "His subordinates are held responsible for thoughts and deeds of a contrary sort; for it could not be that the Father should be the cause (ἔδει γὰρ ἀναίτιον εἶναι) of an evil thing to His offspring" (*De opif. mund.* 75).

In other instances Philo's concern for appropriateness serves to reduce the anthropomorphic significance of OT stories. For example, when Philo relates that God swore with an oath, he concedes that, for thousands, the oath "seems unworthy (ἀνοίκειον) of Him" (*Sacr.* 91). He concludes that, since God needs no one to guarantee his statements, the oath is merely a crutch for our weakness (92–96). Like the other human characteristics that "could never belong (ἀνοίκεια) to the Cause" (96), the oath is created for our weakness to ensure us of the reliability of God.

Although Philo repeatedly insists that God needs nothing, he nevertheless argues that God desires a relationship with humankind. He indicates that "it accords with God's ways (τὸ θεῖον ἄνω καλεῖσθαι θέμις) that those who have received His down-breathing should be called up to Him" (*De plant.* 23). Thus Philo frequently speaks of the human response to the God who needs nothing as humans offer a gift that is worthy of the giver. In the creation story, "God says, 'Take ye for

Me,' thus giving to Himself what is His due (τὰ πρέπονθ' ἑαυτῷ)," and teaching us to guard the gifts in a way "worthy of the Giver" (ἀξίως τοῦ δόντος, *Quis rer. div. her.* 123). The human response, therefore, is to give God the gifts that are his (*De ebr.* 117). Philo comments, for example, in the narrative of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, that Isaac is, in fact, "the only trueborn offspring of the soul" (*Quod Deus immut.* 4). This sacrifice is "a fitting thank-offering" (ἀναγκαῖον καὶ ἁρμόττον χαριστήριον).

Philo's treatment of the sacrifice of Isaac corresponds to his interpretation of Jewish cultic practices. Here one observes that Philo's philosophical commitments do not preclude his loyalty to Judaism, for he consistently describes the necessity of Jewish cultic practices. Philo argues, for example, that both circumcision and the offering of sacrifices "were symbols of two necessary (ἀναγκαοτάτοιν) features of human well-being": the excision of pleasures and the removal of deceit (*De spec. leg.* 1.8). This loyalty to Judaism is especially evident in Philo's treatment of the sacrificial cultus. In keeping with his philosophical commitments, he argues (*De plant.* 126), "it is not possible genuinely to express our gratitude to God by means of buildings and oblations and sacrifices . . . for even the whole world were not a temple adequate (ἀξιόχρεων) to yield the honor due him." He insists that "God found no worthier (ἀξιοπρεπέτερον) temple on the earth than the reasoning faculty" (*De virt.* 188).[28] That the soul is the essential house of God is Philo's consistent claim, in keeping with his philosophical commitments. Thus the Jerusalem temple is not appropriate for God.

Philo never abandons the Jewish practices which would be, under the rationalist critique, inappropriate for God. The temple and the sacrifices symbolize realities that are necessitated by the nature of reality and of God. Here Philo frequently employs forms of ἀνάγκη to describe this necessity, which is attributed to the law of nature. In *De Abr.* 249 he speaks of "nature's inevitable law." In *Leg. all.* 1.8 he says, "The universe must consist of two parts"; in 1.12 he says that the world must have had an origin. In 2.16 he says that "created things must of necessity go through change." Thus the reason of nature pervades the universe, determining its laws.[29] The injunctions of the Torah reflect nature's law.

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[28] On Philo's treatment of Jewish sacrifices, see Everett Ferguson, "Spiritual Sacrifice in Early Christianity and Its Environment," *ANRW* 2.23.2.1159.

[29] Horsley, "Law of Nature," 37, cites *De Jos.* 29–31, "For this world is the Great City, and it has a single constitution and law, which is the reason of nature (λόγος

Just as the laws of local cities are the "ordinances of nature" (θεσμοὶ τῆς φύσεως), so also the ordinances of the cult are necessary. In the construction of the temple, Philo says that "it was necessary in the framing of a temple of man's making—he should take substances like those with which that Ruler made the All" (*De vit. Mos.* 2.88). He adds, "Six names had to be engraved on each of the stones, since each of the hemispheres also divides the zodiac into two and appropriates six of the signs" (*De vit. Mos.* 2.123). The laws of Israel, including the Sabbath law (*De cher.* 87) and the sacrificial cultus, are based on a cosmic order.

Just as circumcision was necessary, so also are sacrifices, even if God does not need them, for sacrifices point to a higher form of sacrifice that is appropriate for God. Philo says, "For He who has been consecrated to the Father of the world must needs have that Father's son to plead his cause (ἀναγκαῖον γὰρ ἦν τὸ ἱερωμένον τῷ τοῦ κόσμου πατρὶ παρακλήτῳ χρῆσθαι . . .), that sins may be remembered no more. . ." (*De vit. Mos.* 2.134). The offering of the calf signifies that sin requires prayers and sacrifices to propitiate the deity (*De vit. Mos.* 2.147). Therefore, Philo commonly speaks of the offerings (*De vit. Mos.* 2.159; cf. *Quod Deus immut.* 4) which, like the Sabbath (*De cher.* 87) and other regulations, are *necessary* (*De decal.* 165, 170; *De spec. leg.* 1.34, 39, 113) or *fitting.* When Philo describes the flame that came forth as Moses and Aaron came from the tabernacle, he concludes that God had expelled from the shrine the fire of common use and "rained instead an ethereal flame from heaven," knowing that "it was fitting (ἥρμοττε) that fire of a more incorruptible nature" than the ordinary should accompany the sacrifices (*De vit. Mos.* 2.158).

As a loyal Jew, Philo did not abandon the boundary markers that identified his people, even if the rationalist critique suggested that he do so.[30] This fact is especially to be seen in his defense of the cultus, which conforms to the cosmic order that requires the sacrifice for sin. Moreover, as W. Maas has shown, one discovers in Philo a "biblical breakthrough" in which he moves from the God of the philosophers to the biblical view of the God who acts in history to keep his promises.[31]

φύσεως). Cf. Cicero *Rep.* 3.33: "True Law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting."

[30] Dreyer, *Gottgeziemenden*, 136.

[31] Maas, *Unveränderlichkeit*, 118–21. In *De vit. Mos.* 1.283, Philo paraphrases the narrative of the book of Numbers: "God cannot be deceived as a man, nor as the son of man does He repent or fail to abide by what He has once said. He will utter nothing at all which shall not certainly be performed, for His word is His deed." Maas comments,

Nevertheless, Philo's philosophical convictions lead him to describe other means of approaching God in an appropriate manner. God's possessions are "sublime and worthy of the deity" (μεγαλοπρεπῶς καὶ θεοπρεπῶς), and all human sacrifices merely give to God his due (πρέποντα, *Quis rer. div. her.* 123). Sacrifices actually represent the giving of the self (*Quod Deus immut.* 4). One who has learned this lesson will offer to God faith, the greatest sacrifice of all (*De cher.* 84–85). God's people will also respond to their Maker with continuous thanksgiving to show that "it dedicates its whole being" (*Quis rer. div. her.* 200) and with the joy that is worthy of God (*De Abr.* 202, 206).

Philo, like Plutarch, maintained his commitment to his ancestral faith and attempted to harmonize it with Platonic philosophy. However, in describing Jewish laws that conformed to a cosmic order and the personal God whose nature is to maintain a relationship with his creatures and to summon them in faith, Philo was not an orthodox Platonist. His understanding of necessity and appropriateness was shaped not only by the tradition of the philosophers, but by his commitment to Judaism as well. Amir contrasted Philo with the Stoics, whose rationalist assumptions Philo adopts, and concluded that the distinguishing factor in Philo's interpretation is that the revelation in Scripture has priority. "For the Stoics rationalism and philosophy are predominant, to which mysticism and theology are subordinated. For Philo mysticism and theology are undoubtedly predominant, to which philosophy and science are subordinated."[32] Thus Williamson and others are correct in saying that Philo and Hebrews have very different understandings of what was necessary and appropriate for God, for both are loyal to their religious commitments. Nevertheless one finds in both writers an attempt to demonstrate the coherence between their religious claims and practices and the nature of reality. Philo represents "new wine in the old bottles of classical rationalism,"[33] and the author of Hebrews represents a similar approach, even if he is not as thoroughgoing in his approach as Philo.

"Here, in the paraphrase of the biblical text, stands the 'immutability' of God in the horizon of salvation history. It is the immutability of God's faithfulness to his promises. . . . The 'abiding' of God, understood otherwise in Philo as immutability in the sense given by Greek philosophy, . . . becomes the 'abiding' of God's covenant faithfulness in salvation history" (119).

[32] Y. Amir, *Die hellenistische Gestalt des Judentums bei Philon von Alexandrien* (FJCD 5; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1983) 198.

[33] Ibid., 199.

Clement of Alexandria

The concern for an appropriate view of God is continued in the work of Clement of Alexandria. Although Clement never cites Philonic traditions when he discusses the concept of appropriateness, the category plays a significant role in his work. In keeping with the Stoic tradition, Clement employs forms of πρέπειν to describe appropriate human conduct.[34] In the apologetic context of the *Stromateis*, Clement develops the theme of what is appropriate both for God and for the human response to God.

Clement's interest in this subject is most thoroughly demonstrated in *Stromateis* 7, where he contrasts the Gnostic's true understanding of God with the erroneous views of those who persecute Christians (7.1). He writes "to prove that the Gnostic alone is holy and pious, and worships the true God in a manner worthy of Him" (θεοπρεπῶς τὸν τῷ ὄντι θεὸν θρησκεύοντα).[35] Worship fit for God (τῷ θεοπρέπει) is followed by loving and being loved by God (7.1.2). The highest object of worship is the Son.

The Gnostic exhibits godliness (θεοπρέπεια), which is the habit that preserves what is becoming to God (τὸ πρέπον τῷ θεῷ). Thus the godly person alone (ὁ θεοπρεπὴς μόνος) knows what is becoming to God (τὸ πρέπον τῷ θεῷ).[36] The first step of faith, according to Clement, is to know God and His Son, who "is nearest to Him who alone is the Almighty One." Clement describes the Son in words that echo the Greek rationalist tradition. Whereas Xenophanes criticized depictions of the gods who move from place to place, Clement says of the Son (7.2.5):

> For from His own point of view the Son of God is never displaced; not being divided, not severed, not passing from place to place; being always everywhere, and being contained nowhere; complete mind, the complete eternal light; all eyes, seeing all things, hearing all things, knowing all things, by His power scrutinizing the powers. To him is placed in subjection all the hosts of angels and gods.

Here Clement employs the common attributes of God that one finds in Philo to describe the Son. Indeed, although the passage betrays little evidence of the direct use of Hebrews here, some of the same themes appear. The reference to the subjection of angels and gods echoes Heb

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[34] See *Paed.* 2.1.10, 13; 2.4.40; 2.5.46; 2.12.127; 3.3.19; 3.4.30; 3.11.79 (GCS).
[35] *Strom.* 7.1.2.
[36] *Strom.* 7.1.3.

1:1–4. Clement's claim in *Strom.* 7.2 that philosophy was delivered to the Greeks through inferior angels echoes the claim in Heb 2:1 that the law was delivered by angels. The point of contact with Hebrews is especially to be seen in Clement's comments about the incarnation and subsequent status of the Savior. He describes the Son as one "who for our sakes assumed flesh capable of suffering." He loved human flesh, "despising not its susceptibility to human suffering; but investing himself with it, came for the salvation of men" (*Strom.* 7.2.6).[37] His care for all "is befitting for Him who has become Lord (καθήκει τῷ κυρίῳ γενομένῳ) of all." The true Gnostic recognizes his exalted status, which is expressed in the language of Greek rationalism. The Savior can neither envy nor be hindered by another; he is without beginning and impassible.

Only the Gnostic knows how to come to God in a way that is appropriate to Him. In *Strom.* 7.4 Clement describes in great detail the improper concepts of the deity held by the Greeks, making full use of the criticism initiated by Xenophanes. The erroneous Greek views are then contrasted with the faith of the Gnostic, who alone recognizes what response to God is appropriate to His dignity. In *Strom.* 7.4 Clement makes full use of the critique which began with Xenophanes in describing in great detail the improper concepts of the deity held by the Greeks. The Greek myths are then contrasted with the faith of the Gnostic, who alone recognizes what response to God is appropriate for the one who needs nothing. The Gnostics "rightly do not sacrifice to God." The church is the temple that "is better for the greatness and dignity of God." The sacrifice offered by the church is the word breathing an incense to God.

An important feature in Clement's contrast between the faith of the true Gnostic and the erroneous ideas about God among the Greeks is the fact that Clement employs Greek rationalism in his critique of the gods of Greece without acknowledging that the same critique could and would be leveled against his own understanding of the incarnation. Clement could at the same time affirm that the incarnation was

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[37] Clement's attempt to maintain a loyalty to both his Christian confession and his philosophical commitments is especially evident in his comments about the flesh of Jesus. Although he affirms the Christian claim that Jesus took on flesh, he says elsewhere that this flesh was not susceptible to pleasure or pain (*Strom.* 6.9.71). In *Strom.* 3.7.59.3 he quotes with approval a letter of Valentinus, where Valentinus says that the food Jesus ate did not pass out of his body. I am indebted to Dr. Ronald Heine for this insight.

appropriate for the Savior and dismiss the numerous accounts among the Greeks of the gods who took on human qualities. As with Philo before him, his primary loyalty is to his confession of faith. Both writers used Greek rationalism when it was convenient to support convictions that were already held. As a Middle Platonist, Clement affirmed the traditional understanding of the impassibility of God and employed the rationalist critique initiated by Xenophanes to ridicule stories about the gods. As a Christian, he affirmed a belief in the incarnation of the Son.

Conclusion

H. Dörrie argued that Christianity and Platonism were two mutually exclusive and rival confessions and that the Christian use of Platonism involved no more than the use of metaphors, comparisons, and literary questions.[38] C. J. De Vogel has suggested, however, that Christianity and Platonism found common ground in their insistence on the transcendence of God and that the Christian response to Platonism extended from total rejection to far-reaching acceptance. Between the two were varying degrees of acceptance,[39] which one can observe in the developing Alexandrian tradition of Clement and his predecessors. Neither Clement nor Philo adopted Platonism uncritically; both were willing to accept "irrational" elements in their own traditions which they would not permit among the Greeks. This complicated relationship between Christianity and Platonism provides the basis for our evaluation of the Epistle to the Hebrews in this developing appropriation of the language of Greek rationalism that is commonly identified with Alexandria. Besides citing Hebrews frequently, Clement demonstrates in his use of rational language that he is continuing a tradition that he shares with both Philo and Hebrews. These writers are by no means uniform in the extent to which they have appropriated Greek rationalism. Nevertheless, they share a tradition in which their faith commitment stands in tension with and commonly takes precedence over their philosophy. In this way Philo, Hebrews, and Clement of Alexandria share a common tradition.

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[38] H. Dörrie, "Was ist 'spätantike Platonismus'?" *TRu* 36 (1971) 300.

[39] C. J. De Vogel, "Platonism and Christianity: A Mere Antagonism or a Profound Common Ground?" *VC* 39 (1985) 19.

THE PUBLIC PRIESTESSES OF POMPEII

Roy Bowen Ward

Everett Ferguson, in his *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, noted:

> Women in the early Roman empire in practice were more prominent than some ancient texts would indicate. Wealth and social position made some women patrons and gave them considerable power and influence apart from the social theory of the time. Many others as well acted with great independence. Women frequently held civic offices. Especially in religion were women prominent, often serving as priestesses and doing so not only in cults of female deities. Women, moreover, were found in a wide variety of occupations.[1]

Recent scholarship on women in the late Roman republic and the early Roman empire has revealed a surprising degree of freedom and, in many cases, equality with men. Eva Cantarella argued in 1981:

> The centuries between the Principate and the Empire saw the 'emancipation' of Roman women. The new rights (except of course political rights, which in Rome as in Greece were reserved for men) allowed women . . . to instruct themselves and cultivate their intellectual interests, to attempt many activities that had been for men only, and to make full use of the law to end unhappy marriages and contract new ones.[2]

Cantarella and others[3] rely especially on literary sources, often focusing on the aristocracy. As important as the literary evidence may be, it has

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[1] Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2d ed. 1993) 72. See also Ferguson's chapter, "Women in the Post-Apostolic Church," in *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity* (ed. C. D. Osburn; Joplin, MO: College Press, 1993) 1.493–513.

[2] Eva Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (trans. M. B. Fant; Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University, 1981 [ET 1987]) 140f.

[3] Note, for example, the statement of J. P. Sullivan ("Martial's Sexual Attitudes," *Philologus* 123 [1979] 296): "The evidence indicates that . . . the female sex, at least in the social strata most visible in our documents, enjoyed a personal, sexual and economic liberation unparalleled in civilized states before the latter half of the twentieth century in America and some parts of Europe." Cf. idem, *Martial: The Unexpected Classic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991) 192–97.

some drawbacks for the subject of women. First, most of it is written by men. Second, some (many?) of the male writers, such as Juvenal, longed for the good, old days when women were in their "proper place." How representative are these authors?

A study of the women of Pompeii offers a potential check or even corrective to our understanding of women in the Roman world, especially from 80 BCE, when the city came under Roman rule as the *Colonia Cornelia Veneria Pompeianorum,* to 24 August 79 CE, when Vesuvius erupted and covered the city. We know the names of almost five hundred women appearing in inscriptions and graffiti throughout the city. Some were written or inscribed by women. There are still others written by men about women. These women range from aristocrats to tavern owners to prostitutes to slaves. In addition we have many pictures and sculptures of women, as well as articles belonging to women. This evidence has scarcely been tapped.[4] The only attempt to date to cover the entire corpus of evidence in a published book has been Michele D'Avino's *The Women of Pompeii,*[5] but his book was intended to be a "popular" book (thus it has no citations) and is often unreliable[6] and tendentious.[7] There is an unpublished dissertation, "The Public Role of Pompeian Women," by Frances Stahl Bernstein,[8] as well as some short studies, such as those by Elizabeth Lyding Will and by Natalie Boymel Kampen and others.[9]

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[4] For example, Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters,* 140, mentions Asellina, who sold hot drinks. Mary Lefkowitz and Maureen Fant include 14 inscriptions and graffiti in their anthology, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982) 210, 255, 256. Sarah Pomeroy uses evidence from Pompeii to discuss the occupations of the lower classes and women's participation in the worship of Isis, in *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken Books, 1975) 200f., 223.

[5] Michele D'Avino, *The Women of Pompeii* (trans. M. H. Jones and L. Nusco; Naples: Loffredo, 1967).

[6] Ramsay McMullen, "Women in Public in the Roman Empire," *Historia* 29 (1980) 209 n. 6; repr. in *Changes in the Roman Empire: Essays in the Ordinary* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) 338 n. 6.

[7] Elizabeth Lyding Will comments, "D'Avino's perspective is anything but feminist" ("Women in Pompeii," *Archaeology* 32:5 [1979] 43).

[8] University of Maryland, 1987.

[9] Will, "Women in Pompeii," 34–43; Elaine Fantham, Helene Peet Foley, Natalie Boymel Kampen, Sarah B. Pomeroy, and H. A. Shapiro, *Women in the Classical World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); "The Women of Pompeii," 330–44. We may expect a more thorough and scholarly study by Liisa Savunen of the University of Helsinki in her forthcoming published doctoral dissertation, *Women and the Public Sphere in Pompeii.*

A. *Women and Politics*

This present study focuses on the eleven women at Pompeii who held the title *sacerdos publica*, public priestess. There were other priestesses in Pompeii, such as Terentia Paramone, a priestess of Demeter Thesmophorus (*IG* 14. 702), and a wall painting depicts priestesses in a ritual performed at a temple of Isis very similar in architecture to the Temple of Isis at Pompeii.[10] But these other priestesses did not have the title *publica*, "belonging to the state."

Paavo Castrén has noted: ". . . the priesthood and the secular magistry were never clearly separated from each other: many magistrates often performed religious functions, and, on the other hand, the priesthoods were a part of a public career."[11] Thus, for example, M. Holconius Celer was priest of Augustus, then *duovir quinquennalis*, the most important magistry, in 15/16 CE, and then, sometime after the death of Augustus in 14 CE, priest of the deified Augustus.[12] We know of no women in Pompeii holding the position of *duovir* or *aedilis*, but we do know of eleven women holding the public priesthood. Like their male counterparts, such as Holconius Celer, all were drawn from decurial families, and, according to literary evidence, *sacerdotes* would be elected by the people in public assemblies.[13] The surviving evidence of women in the public priesthood begins with the establishment of the Principate.

Although Cantarella speaks of new rights for women, she adds parenthetically, "except of course political rights, which in Rome as in Greece were reserved for men."[14] This view must be reassessed in the light of Richard A. Bauman's recent study of women and politics in Rome from the mid-fourth century BCE to 68 CE. Bauman explores what he calls "campaigns of direct action mounted by women," "politics of protest" by women, and eventually the attributes of public office gained by

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[10] For a reproduction of this painting, see Fantham *et al.*, *Women*, 343, fig. 12.10.

[11] Paavo Castrén, *Ordo Populusque Pompeianus: Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 8; Rome: Bardi, 1975) 68.

[12] Ibid., 68f., 104, 176.

[13] Velleius tells us that in 104 BCE Cn. Domitius "passed a law that the *sacerdotes*, who had previously been chosen by their colleagues, should now be elected by the people" (2.12.3). See also Cassius Dio, 37.1, concerning the law of Domitius. See Mary Beard, "Priesthood in the Roman Republic," in *Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (ed. Beard and J. North; Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1990) 23–24, 35–36. Castrén, *Ordo*, 68, agrees, but his note 1 must be incorrect since his Latin quotation cannot be found in an electronic search of the works of Cicero.

[14] Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters*, 140.

women. Of particular importance is Bauman's recognition that in the early Principate from its foundation by Augustus in 27 BCE the meaning and importance of suffrage changed. "The decreased importance of the popular assembly is the crucial factor, for it made the denial of the franchise to women less relevant; it meant that something that had been refused to women, though available to all men, no longer mattered."[15] What did matter was the "female lobby,"[16] the political role played by the public priestesses in Rome (the Vestals),[17] and the political role of women such as Livia, who shared power with her husband Augustus and her son Tiberius.[18]

In this study I will focus only on the women holding public office in Pompeii, leaving aside the fact that many women of non-decurial classes were also publicly involved in campaign politics to elect men to the office of *duovir* or *aedilis*.[19]

B. *The Public Priestesses*

1. *Mamia*

One of the most important, and probably the earliest, of these public priestesses was Mamia, daughter of Publius Mamius.[20] Castrén shows that she belonged to a distinguished immigrant family which also produced a magistrate for Pompeii.[21] An inscription found at the Temple of the Genius of the Augustus on the Forum at VII.9.2[22] reads:

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[15] Richard A. Bauman, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992) 5. See also Jane F. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1986) 265.

[16] Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 123.

[17] Ibid., 212.

[18] Ibid., 133. I will return to the subject of Livia below.

[19] James L. Franklin Jr., *Pompeii: The Electoral Programmata, Campaigns and Politics, AD 71–79* (Papers and Monographs of the American Academy in Rome 28; Rome: American Academy, 1980); Frances Bernstein, "Pompeian Women and the *Programmata*," in *Studia Pompeiana and Classica in Honor of Wilhelmina F. Jashemski*, vol. 1, *Pompeiana* (ed. R. I. Curtis; New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas, 1988–89) 1–18; Liisa Savunen, "Women and Elections in Pompeii," in *Women in Antiquity: New Assessments* (ed. Richard Hawley and Barbara Levick; London: Routledge, 1995) 194–206.

[20] Castrén, *Ordo*, 70f., calls Mamia a public priestess of Venus, but there is no inscriptional evidence for the name of Venus associated with Mamia.

[21] Ibid., 71, 188.

[22] The Roman numeral designates the regio, the following arabic numeral designates the insula, and the final arabic numeral designates the door.

> Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess, [built this] to the genius of the Augustus on her own land and with her own money. (*CIL* 10.816)

This temple was built in the time of Augustus[23] when many monuments were being built in his honor, including the Temple of Fortuna Augustus built by Marcus Tullius on his own land (VII.4.1, north of the Forum) and at his own expense (*CIL* 10.820). In both cases, such building was, as Paul Veyne has argued, a "political act," presented as a *euergesia*.[24] But in both cases it was a political act in another sense; namely, such buildings tied the colony of Pompeii to the emperor in Rome. Mamia's temple was the more important since it was the site for the cult of the emperor,[25] and it must have put her in close association with M. Holconius Rufus, the most distinguished personage in the Augustan age, who was already a priest of Augustus before 2 BCE.[26] Both Mamia as a public priestess and Holconius as priest of Augustus would have been elected by the people at public assemblies. Moreover, Castrén reasonably supposes that the temple to the Genius of the Augustus would not have been constructed without prior consent or even incentive of Augustus himself.[27]

The *scola* tomb of Mamia, located just outside the Porta Ercolano (W 4) at the northwest corner of the city, bears this inscription: "To Mamia, daughter of Publius, public priestess, the place of burial was given by decree of the decurions" (*CIL* 10.998). Some magistrates were buried at public expense by order of the decurions. For example, adjacent to Mamia's tomb is the *scola* tomb of Aulus Veius (W 2), who in the Augustan period was twice *duovir*, once *duovir quinquennalis*, and

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[23] L. Richardson Jr., *Pompeii: An Architectural History* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988) 191. The earlier view that this temple was built in the time of Vespasian (see August Mau, *Pompeii, Its Life and Art* [trans. F. W. Kelsey; New Rochelle, NY: Caratzas Brothers, rev. ed. 1902, repr. 1982] 109) has generally been abandoned, although it is still called the "Temple of Vespasian" in guidebooks, etc., e.g., Baldassare Conticello, *Pompeii: Archaeological Guide* (Guide de Agostini; Novara: Instituto Geographico de Agostini, 1987) 58.

[24] Paul Veyne, *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism* (trans. B. Pearce; New York: Penguin, 1976, ET 1990) 361. On *euergesia* and the priesthood, see Richard Gordon, "The Veil of Power: Emperors, Sacrificers and Benefactors," in *Pagan Priests*, 201–31, esp. 224–31.

[25] Castrén, *Ordo*, 75; see Kurt Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte* (HAW 4; Munich: Beck, 1960) 306–8.

[26] Castrén, *Ordo*, 69; John H. D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome in the Augustan Age and Beyond: The Eminence of the *Gens Holconia*," in *Studia Pompeiana*, 54–58.

[27] Castrén, *Ordo*, 96.

military tribune; as in the case of Mamia's tomb, Veius's was "by decree of the decurions" (*CIL* 10.996). It is clear that Mamia, as public priestess, was honored in the company of other important civic leaders.

It is worth noting that nothing on the tomb is said about Mamia's husband or children. Yet tombs frequently mentioned family members. For example, outside the Porta di Nola east of the city there is a *scola* tomb with the following inscription: "N. Herennius Menenia Celsus, son of Numerius, twice *duovir* with juridical powers, prefect, to his wife Aesquilia Pollia, daughter of Caius. She lived twenty-two years. The place of the sepulchre was given by the people at the decree of the decurions (*N. Sc.* 1910, p. 390). Note that even when the place is given by the public, a surviving relative, in this case, a husband, is named as having the tomb built. It is otherwise in the case of the tomb of Mamia.

Is it possible that Mamia was unmarried? The Augustan marriage law, the *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, of 18 BCE and its revision in 9 CE, the *Lex Papia Poppaea*, called for men to be married between the ages of twenty-five and sixty and women, from ages twenty to fifty, but it is widely noted that these laws were not successful and many chose to remain unmarried.[28] Mamia, a public priestess, appears independently as a rich woman, a benefactor to the city and the cult of the Augustus, and highly honored in her death.

2. *Eumachia*

Also well known in the city of Pompeii was the public priestess Eumachia. Over the entrance to the largest building in the Forum (VII.9.1/67) was the following inscription in large letters (23 cm high = ca. 9 in.): "Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess, in her own name and that of her son, M. Numistrius Fronto, constructed at her own expense the columnar porch, the covered gallery and the portico; she herself dedicated the building to Concordia and to Pietas Augusta (*CIL* 10.811).[29] This building, dedicated to Concordia Augusta and to Pietas Augusta, was built either in the Augustan period when other Augustan

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[28] P. A. Brunt, "The Augustan Marriage Laws," *Italian Manpower: 225* BC–AD *14* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971) 560, 586; P. Csillag, *The Augustan Laws on Family Relations* (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1976) 43, 71; Roy Bowen Ward, "Musonius and Paul on Marriage," *NTS* 36 (1990) 282f.

[29] This inscription is fragmentary, but it is essentially the same as the inscription (*CIL* 10.810) which appears over the side entrance at VII.9.67 and which can be read fully. The translation is by D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome," 63 n. 12.

monuments were being erected or, more probably, in the early years of the reign of Tiberius.[30]

D'Arms interprets the dedication as showing that Eumachia's focus was on Rome and the Porticus Livia, dedicated to Concordia by Livia and her son Tiberius in 7 BCE.[31] The building of Eumachia and the Porticus Livia have close architectural affinities. D'Arms argues that Eumachia's inclusion of her son would invite a comparison to Livia and her son.[32] The dedication to Pietas may also refer to the Roman senate's voting an altar to Pietas Augusta in 22 CE.[33] When Augustus died in 14 CE, Livia was made a priestess of Augustus,[34] further inviting a comparison of the public priestess Eumachia with Livia.

The arguments of D'Arms and others[35] are convincing, but if Eumachia intended to compare herself with Livia, what were the implications? Bauman argues that Livia was the "best example" of women pressing for partnership in political power.[36] In 35 BCE Octavian, Livia's husband, had enacted a law that granted tribunician sacrosanctity to Livia and to his sister, Octavia. This meant that these women—the first time for any women—had been given one of the attributes of public office.[37] When Octavian founded the Principate in 27 BCE and was called Augustus, Livia became, as Bauman describes it, "his constant adviser and confidante, to the extent of being consulted, even on public affairs, in preference to the members of his *consilium*."[38] Cassius Dio noted that Livia was perceived as having the mastery (*katakrateo*) over Augustus.[39] In 2 BCE the status of *pater patriae*, father of his country, was conferred on Augustus, whereupon people began calling Livia *mater patriae*, although the title was not official.[40] In the provinces she received

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[30] Mau, *Pompeii*, 111; Richardson, *Pompeii*, 197; D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome," 63 n. 16.

[31] Ovid *Fasti* 6.638–48; Cassius Dio, 55.8.1–2; D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome," 53.

[32] Ibid., 53, 63 n. 16.

[33] Tacitus *Annals* 3.64; D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome," 63 n. 16.

[34] Cassius Dio, 56.46.1.

[35] See also Richardson, "Concordia and Concordia Augusta: Rome and Pompeii," *La Parola del Passato* 33 (1978) 260–72.

[36] Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 217.

[37] Ibid., 94.

[38] Ibid., 217.

[39] Cassius Dio, 58.2.5.

[40] Cassius Dio, 58.2.3; Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 126.

honors, cities were named after her, and cult inscriptions were dedicated to her.[41]

When Augustus died in 14 BCE, by his will Livia was adopted into the Julian *gens*, so that her name became Julia Augusta. When Augustus was deified, she became priestess of his cult.[42] If she had mastery over Augustus, she was even more domineering over her son, the new emperor Tiberius. Cassius Dio described her in these words:

> For she occupied a very exalted station, far above all women of former days, so that she could at any time receive the senate and such of the people as wished to greet her in her house; and this fact was entered in the public records. The letters of Tiberius bore, for a time, her name also, and communications were addressed to both alike. Except that she never ventured to enter the senate-chamber or the camps or the public assemblies, she undertook to manage everything as if she were sole ruler. (57.12)[43]

Tacitus recounts that Livia dedicated a statue to the deified Augustus near the theater of Marcellus and placed her name (as Julia Augusta) above Tiberius's name—which he resented.[44]

We know that Livia was known in Pompeii because a statue base was discovered in the temple of the Capitoline gods dedicated to Julia Augusta, that is, to Livia (*CIL* 10.799). This inscription must be after 14 CE, when she acquired the name of Julia Augusta, and it probably predates Eumachia's building inscription. D'Arms argues that the building of Eumachia was built sometime after the altar of Pietas Augusta in 22 CE, which would have been at the height of Livia's political power. (Livia died in 29 CE at the age of 86.[45]) If Eumachia was daring to compare herself with Livia, as seems to be the case, then she was daring to assume a similar role in Pompeian civic politics.

Bernstein agrees that Livia and Tiberius were models, but she argues that the building was built to "assure [her son] Numistrius' political future,"[46] without discussing the possibility that Eumachia, like Livia,

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[41] Ibid., 127.

[42] Cassius Dio, 56.46.1.

[43] Translation by Ernest Cary, *Dio's Roman History* (LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924, repr. 1981) 7.141.

[44] Tacitus *Annals* 3.64.

[45] Cassius Dio, 58.2.1. Velleius, a close associate of Tiberius, in narrating the death of Livia, called her "the most eminent woman, more like the gods than humans" (2.130.5).

[46] Bernstein, "Public Role," 120. Fantham *et al.*, *Women*, 334, also suppose that the building was for the son who "was running for public office." But there is no evidence

wanted power for herself. Although it is true that Livia "aided and abetted" Tiberius in his political career, it is also true, as I have noted, that Livia exercised extraordinary power while her husband Augustus was alive and, after his death, assumed even more power, often to the consternation of her son, the emperor Tiberius. If Bernstein were correct, why didn't the dedicatory inscription mention only Numistrius's name or, at least, mention his name first? We do have an example of parents' aiding and abetting their son's political career, namely the inscription concerning the rebuilding of the temple of Isis in Pompeii after it was destroyed in the earthquake of 62 CE, but in this inscription it is the son himself who is named as benefactor, not his parents, N. Popidius Ampliatus and Cornelia Celsa (*CIL* 10.848): "N. Popidius Celsinus, son of Numerius, rebuilt at his expense the temple of Isis after it had collapsed in the earthquake; for his generosity the decurions, without further fee, elected him to the *ordo*, even though he was only 6 years old" (*CIL* 10.846). I have already noted that the emperor Tiberius took umbrage at his mother's placing her name first in a dedicatory inscription. Eumachia's name stands first, and it was at her expense that the building was built. The women—Livia and Eumachia—are at center stage, not the sons.

Eumachia's building, a very large one, was probably a multipurpose building[47] much like the older and somewhat smaller basilica on the forum.[48] That Eumachia had some connection with the fullers, probably as their patron, is evidenced in a niche off the eastern portico of the building where a statue of a woman was found with this inscription on the statue base: "To Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, public priestess, the fullers [dedicated this statue]" (*CIL* 10.813).[49]

The Eumachii, an old Campanian *gens*, have been variously connected with viticulture, the tile industry, the amphora industry, and the woolen industry.[50] Eumachia's husband was M. Numistrius Fronto, who

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for that assertion.

[47] Castren, *Ordo*, 101; Bernstein, "Public Role," 120–23; Richardson, *Pompeii*, 198. The older view that it was used exclusively for the woolen industry has been successfully criticized by Richardson et al.

[48] Bernstein, "Public Role," 109, mistakenly states that the basilica was larger than the building of Eumachia, but the dimensions of Eumachia's building are 60 x 40 m, while those of the basilica are 60 x 24 m.

[49] A picture of this statue can be seen in Fantham et al., *Women*, 335, fig. 12.4. But the inscription is mislabeled on 334 as *CIL* 10.811, instead of 813.

[50] Castrén, *Ordo*, 41, 95, 165f.

was *duovir* in 2/3 CE (*CIL* 10.892), but who apparently died during his magistry.[51] Of her son, mentioned in the building inscriptions, nothing more is known. We know that an L. Eumachius Fuscus was *aedilis* in 31/32 CE (*CIL* 10.899, 900), and Castrén suspects that he was the brother of Eumachia.[52]

Eumachia's magnificent tomb, the largest extant tomb of Pompeii,[53] is located outside the Porta di Nocera at the south of the city with this inscription: "Eumachia, daughter of Lucius, [built this] for herself and for her household (PN W11 a–b). There is no indication that Eumachia ever remarried after the death of her husband, although the Augustan marriage laws mandated remarriage—unless the widow was over the age of fifty, which might have been the case for Eumachia. Nor is there any inscriptional evidence from her tomb that her husband or son was buried there.[54] But there is evidence of some connection with the important Alleii. Buried in Eumachia's tomb were Alleius Nobilis of low descent and Pomponia Decarchis, a freedwoman, who were the adoptive parents of Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius, as well as two prominent freedmen of the Alleii (PN W d–f).[55]

As in the case of Mamia, the public priestess Eumachia appears as an independent and a very prominent and aspiring woman in Pompeii.

3. *Clodia and Lassia*

Another early public priestess—a public priestess of Ceres[56]—was Clodia, known to us by two monument inscriptions (*CIL* 10.1074 and PN W 5). Clodia's grandfather was A. Clodius M. f., the first known Clodius in Pompeii, of the tribe Palatina and of low descent.[57] He was a *scriba*, one who would serve as an attendant to an *aedilis* or a *duovir*,

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[51] Ibid., 97, 198. D'Arms notes that the husband has been mistakenly identified with his homonymous son ("Pompeii and Rome," 63, n. 14). This mistake, which goes back to Mommsen in his 1883 publication of vol. 10 of the *CIL*, is repeated, *inter al.*, in Fantham, *et al.*, *Women*, 334.

[52] Castrén, *Ordo*, 166.

[53] See Bernstein, "Public Role," 107. The tomb is unpublished; the assertion that it is the largest extant tomb is based on my on-site research.

[54] D'Arms, "Pompeii and Rome," 63, n. 14. There is an L. Eumachius Aprilis buried there (PN W 11c), but nothing more is known about him.

[55] Castrén, *Ordo*, 109, 133, no. 23.

[56] Castrén comments, "Ceres was . . . a very popular goddess in Campanian towns, probably because the worship of Demeter was very important in the Greek colonies of Campania" (*Ordo*, 71).

[57] Ibid., 94.

and after 27 BCE was elected *magister Pagi Augusti Felicis suburbani* (*CIL* 10.1074), an office usually reserved for freedmen of Pompeii's most distinguished *gentes*.[58] But since he was designated as "M. f.," "son of Marcus," and not "M. l.," "freedman of Marcus," he was not a freedman, but perhaps the son of a freedman. He married Lassia M. f. from one of the most important wine-producing families in pre-Roman Campania, whose main estates were on the peninsula of Sorrento, and who was herself a public priestess of Ceres (*CIL* 10.1074), although we know nothing more about her.[59]

The son of Clodius M. f. and Lassia M. f. was A. Clodius A. f. Flaccus, one of the most distinguished civic leaders in the Augustan period and the father of the public priestess Clodia. He was *duovir* three times (the third time being in 3/2 BCE[60]), *quinquennalis*, and military tribune of the people (*CIL* 10.1740). Clodia was, therefore, the product of a Clodian line of low estate and an important indigenous Campania family whose son, Clodia's father, achieved high standing in Pompeian politics.

What is extraordinary about *CIL* 10.1074 is that it is an inscription (location uncertain) which names across the top Clodia herself; Lassia M. f., her grandmother; A. Clodius M. f., her grandfather; A. Clodius A. f. Flaccus, her father,—with all his honors; and L. Cellius L. f. Calvos, her husband and a decurion. (It could be argued that Clodia outranked her husband by virtue of her title of public priestess.) But at the bottom of this inscription, it is signed by Clodia in letters that are far larger than any of the names of these distinguished relatives. In these large letters it says: "CLODIA A. F. HOC MONUMENTUM SUA IMPENSA / SIBI ET SUIS." She built the monument for herself and her household at her own expense. Although she does enumerate all of the honors won by her illustrious father, her name is inscribed much larger than his. In a world in which inscriptional public relations mattered, this must not be passed over lightly. Clodia was obviously seeking public recognition.

Clodia herself was buried in a tomb outside the Porta di Nocera (PN W 5), along with six others: A. Clodius Aegialus, a freedman of Clodia; Tironia Repentina, his wife; A. Clodius Iustus and A. Clodius Pompeianus, sons Aegialus and Tironia; A. Clodius Faustus, a freedman of Clodia; and Clodia Nigella, a freedwoman of Clodia who was a *porcaria*

[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid., 181.
[60] Ibid., 94.

publica.[61] John Crook, speaking of other examples, has noted that the "reception of the freedmen into the family tomb is indeed in a sense evidence of the solidarity of the patron-freedman relationship,"[62] in this case, including a patron-freedwoman relationship. It is worth noting that there is no reference to Clodia's husband, Cellius, and that these freedpersons carried Clodia's gentilical name.[63] If Cellius had died, apparently Clodia had not remarried—and there are no known children. Her manumitted slaves, including Clodia Nigella, also had *cognomina*. Bauman notes that the practice of giving a *cognomen* to a woman began only in the Principate and was, for the aristocratic women, "symptomatic of their greater access to public affairs."[64] Perhaps Clodia Nigella's slave name was originally Nigella (meaning "black" or "dark"), but as a freedwoman she had a gentilical *nomen* and a *cognomen*. All of this is an indication that Clodia, the public priestess of Ceres, was, like Mamia and Eumachia, an independent, aspiring, and progressive woman in Pompeii.

4. *Holconia*

Not much is known of Holconia except that she was a public priestess and the daughter of one of the most important public figures in Pompeii, M. Holconius Rufus (*CIL* 10.950).[65] She must have held her office in the same time period as Clodia because we know that their fathers were *duoviri* in successive years, 3/2 and 2/1 BCE, an extremely important time for the ties between Rome and Pompeii. We have no evidence that she was married.

5. *Istacidia Rufilla*

A funerary inscription outside the Porta Ercolano names "Istacidia N. f. Rufilla, public priestess" (*CIL* 10.999). She was the daughter of

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[61] Ibid., 154f., no. 119.

[62] John Crook, *Law and Life of Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 1967) 136.

[63] Bernstein, "Public Role," 15: "By the names given them at birth—feminine forms of their father's *nomen*—women were publicly labeled and identified as daughters." This, of course, was true also for sons who received the masculine forms of their father's name. But when slaves were manumitted by a woman, they could and did receive the woman's name, either in the masculine or feminine form.

[64] Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 7.

[65] For the eminence of the *gens* Holconia and M. Holconius Rufus in particular, see D'Arms, "Rome and Pompeii," 53–62.

N. Istacidius N. f. Cilix, who was a *duovir*, probably in the Augustan period.[66] It should be noted that she had a *cognomen*. There is no evidence that she was married.

6. *Alleia Decimilla*

On a tomb outside the Porta Ercolano (E 36)[67] is the following inscription: "To M. Alleius Luccius Libella, father, *aedilis*, *duovir*, prefect, [*duovir*] *quinquennalis*, and to M. Alleius Libella, son, decurion, who lived 17 years;[68] the place for the monument was given by the public. Alleia M. f. Decimilla, public priestess of Ceres, built the tomb for her husband and son" (*CIL* 10.1036).

It is to be noted that Alleia and her husband had the same *nomen*. The Alleii were an important family, more so than the Luccii, and Castrén supposes, with good reason, that Alleia's father adopted M. Luccius Libella into the Alleii family.[69] But this meant also that the son carried his mother's name.

Alleia Decimilla's husband was prefect *cursus honorum* between 20 and 24 CE and *quinquennalis* in 25/26,[70] during the reign of Tiberius. This would mean that Alleia Decimilla was a public priestess of Ceres in the period when Eumachia was also a public priestess.

7. *Aquivia Quarta and [Ru]fula*

In the building of Eumachia was found an inscription (*CIL* 10.812) with the names of three public priestesses: Eumachia L. f. public priestess, Aquivia M. f. Quarta public priestess of Ceres, and a public priestess of Ceres whose name cannot be read because of a missing fragment, although her *cognomen* is most likely [Ru]fula ("red").[71] These must all be contemporaries of Alleia Decimilla.

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[66] Castrén, *Ordo*, 71, 100, 178, no. 204.

[67] Hans Eschebach, *Die städtebauliche Entwicklung des antiken Pompeji* (Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts, römische Abteilung; Heidelberg: F. H. Kerle, 1970) 152, identifies the site as E 37, but on site it is numbered E 36.

[68] Bernstein, "Public Role," 74, incorrectly gives the age as 27, but she correctly gives the age as 17 on her 97 and 213.

[69] Castrén, *Ordo*, 71, 104, 133, no. 23, 184, no. 225.

[70] Ibid., 67, 104.

[71] Ibid., 71. In the *CIL* Mommsen reconstructed the missing name as [Heia Ru]fulai, but there is no basis for this reconstruction, and Castrén notes that we know of no Heii in Pompeii (*Ordo*, 71).

Aquivia Quarta is the only example of the Aquivii in Pompeii; thus little can be said about her other than what is on the inscription.

8. *Alleia*

Outside the Porta di Nocera is an inscription for Alleia Mai f., public priestess of Venus and Ceres.[72] She was the daughter of Cn. Alleius Nigidius Maius, who was a *duovir quinquennalis* candidate and the adopted son of Alleius Nobilis and Pomponia Decarchis, who were buried in Eumachia's tomb (PN W 11).[73]

The inscription was made by the decree of the decurions; thus it is similar to that of Mamia's inscription, suggesting that Alleia was a prominent person in Pompeian civic affairs. As in the case of Mamia's tomb, there is no reference to husband or children.

9. *Vibia Sabina*

Vibia C. f. Sabina was a public priestess of Julia Augusta (*CIL* 10.961, 962, location unknown) and a relative of C. Vibius Secundus, who was *duovir* in 56/57 CE.[74] There is no reference to husband or children.

What is particularly interesting is that Vibia Sabina's priesthood suggests that in her time there was a cult to Julia Augusta. Castrén thinks Vibia was a priestess of Agrippina, wife of Claudius, rather than of Livia.[75] In 50 CE Claudius, at the urging of Agrippina, adopted Nero, and, according to Tacitus, Agrippina received the title of Augusta, the first living consort of a living emperor to be so honored.[76] In many ways Agrippina outdid Livia in seeking the power to rule. We do not know what particular aspirations Vibia Sabina, as public priestess of Julia Augusta, had, but she could have been as aspiring as Eumachia, who compared herself with the earlier Julia Augustus, Livia.

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[72] *N.Sc.*, 1890, 333.
[73] Castrén, *Ordo*, 109, 133, no. 23.
[74] Ibid., 109, 241, no. 457.
[75] Ibid., 72.
[76] Tacitus *Annals* 12.26.1; see Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 182.

C. *Political Influence*

Beyond that which can be determined from the inscriptional evidence for each of these public priestesses, what can reasonably be said about their political influence in Pompeii? Jane Gardner represents a widely held view when she discusses wealthy women and their role in the public sphere: "Provincial women had no say in the actual business of decision-making and no membership of the governing bodies, any more than the governors' wives had authority actually to govern."[77] With reference to literary evidence, Bauman's study challenges that assessment in a number of particulars, as I have noted above. With reference to the evidence from Pompeii, the public priestesses do not fit neatly into the category of "governors' wives." In the first place, a number of these women do not appear as wives. They appear as independent persons invested in a public office.

During the time of the appearance of public priestesses in Pompeii, Livy published his history of Rome, in which he describes the 195 BCE women's march on Rome to seek the repeal of the Oppian Law. They lobbied and protested and eventually won. But Livy included a speech by Marcus Porcius Cato, who, first of all, blamed the husbands for not keeping their wives under control (34.2.1–2). Cato goes on to complain about these matrons: "We let them interfere in public business and meddle in the Forum and formal assemblies. What are they doing now on the streets and at the corners, if they are not persuading the tribunes to vote for abrogation of the law?" (34.2.11–12) Cato added: "If they win in this, what will they not attempt? . . . The moment they begin to be your equals, they will be your superiors (34.3.1, 3).

First-century readers of Livy would have recognized that Cato's views on women did not carry the day and that women were freer and more independent, although a few readers might have wished otherwise (Juvenal comes to mind). Indeed, some women, such as Livia, were acting as if they were superior. If Eumachia dared to model herself on Livia, it is difficult to believe that she had no say in the political issues of Pompeii.

Ramsay MacMullen, in his 1986 study of "Women's Power in the Principate," concluded by stating, "Women who wished it could indeed attain power. We have seen them exercising it—as a minority but no

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[77] Gardner, *Women in Roman Law*, 264.

doubt more effectually during the pax Romana than ever before."[78] In speaking of Eumachia in an earlier study, MacMullen wrote, "To be chosen priestess brought one before the public eye very sharply," but he subsequently added that "women are rarely found in roles . . . which would require their speaking in public. They are to be seen, then, but not heard."[79] Inscriptional evidence does not tell us whether the public priestesses spoke in public or not, but that is also true for the men. It is, however, difficult to believe that a priest or priestess, by virtue of his or her office, would not speak, at least in public cult observances.[80] But the question of whether Eumachia or other public priestesses spoke in public, as Hortensia did,[81] is not as important as the question of whether they exerted influence, that is, lobbied the decurions and magistrates.

It is not hard to imagine each of these public priestesses, especially those not married, behaving like Livia, that is, receiving decurions, clients, and such of the people as wished to greet her in her house (paraphrasing Cassius Dio 57.12).[82] As Andrew Wallace-Hadrill has noted, "[T]he home was a locus of public life,"[83] and what Cassius Dio describes for Livia is the traditional Roman *salutatio*. Such occasions would offer ample opportunity for these important women to express their wishes.

One development in Pompeii in the first century is a likely example of women's influence in public affairs, namely, the building of public baths. Public building was under the supervision of the decurions. Two of the old baths, the Stabian and the Forum baths, had segregated sections for men and for women, but in each case the women's sections were smaller and lacked the facilities that the men had. The facilities were separate but not equal. In the first century bath architecture changed throughout the empire, and in the last years of Pompeii, two public baths were built with single facilities for both women and men, the Central baths and the Suburban baths.[84] Who else but the public

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[78] Reprinted in MacMullen, *Changes*, 176.

[79] MacMullen, "Women in Public," 209, 216.

[80] For examples of women speaking in cult observances, see John Scheid, "The Religious Roles of Roman Women," *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 1, *From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints* (ed. P. S. Pantel; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1992) 377–408.

[81] See Bauman, *Women and Politics*, 81–83.

[82] See above, p. 324.

[83] *Houses and Society in Pompeii and Herculaneum* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994) 5.

[84] Roy Bowen Ward, "Women in Roman Baths," *HTR* 85 (1992) 125–47; Lucianna

priestesses of the time could be the best candidates for being the ones ultimately responsible for this change, even though it required the approval of the male decurions?

The "independence" and "considerable power and influence" of women in the Roman empire to which Ferguson called our attention prove to be replicated in this important provincial city of Pompeii.[85]

Jacobelli, *Le Pitture erotiche delle Terme Suburbane di Pompei* (Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei Monografie 10; Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1995) 92–97.

[85] I am indebted to the archaeologists, Professors Lucianna Jacobelli and Umberto Pappalardo, both of the Università di Napoli, for literally opening doors for me on site and for offering me invaluable insights. I am also indebted to Professor S. A. Kay, chair of the Political Science Department of Miami University, who has read various drafts of this paper and who forces me to write so that an intelligent non-specialist can understand what I write. Of course, no one of these is responsible for my interpretations or errors.

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF EVERETT FERGUSON

Compiled by Craig Churchill

This bibliography of the works of Everett Ferguson is only a partial indicator of Ferguson's great productivity. In addition to these books and articles, he is the author of a large number of book reviews and popular essays.

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